



THE  
BEGINNINGS OF  
SOUTH INDIAN HISTORY

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## PREFACE

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The following pages contain the substance of the course of Special Lectures delivered before the University of Madras in January and February of this year. I have also included in this course by way of introduction two other lectures, the first of these was intended to be the inaugural lecture for the University and the second delivered on a previous occasion, both of them bearing directly on the subject of this course. In one or two cases the lecture as delivered was revised to give it the necessary expansion to make it fuller. Otherwise the volume contains no more than the special course of lectures.

The sources of matter for these lectures have often been exploited by fits and starts, for various purposes on occasions by different writers. No one, however, made a constructive critical attempt to make these yield the results they were capable of, except the late Mr Kanakasabhai Pillai of the Madras Postal Service. His work, giving as it does obvious evidence of great learning and considerable



insight, still fell short in the essential particular that each one of the sources tapped was not subjected to a detailed criticism in respect of its historical worth. Notwithstanding this defect it is monumental work which deserves better of the Tamilian though his conclusions may not all of them stand the test of time and criticism. Since his time we have advanced considerably, and most of the classics have been edited critically by Pandits who deserve public thanks for the labour and learning brought to bear upon the work. Improvements are certainly possible and will surely come if some interest is evinced in the results of that work. The names of Pandit Mahamahopadhyaya Swaminatha Aiyar of Madras, the late Pandit Binnattūr Narayanaswami Aiyar of Kumbhakonam and Pandit Rangaswami Aiyangar of Vamambadi deserve special mention in this connection. It gives me the greatest pleasure to acknowledge my obligation to their work. I should not forget, however, another labourer of an elder generation, the late Mr C W Thamothearam Pillai to whose loving labours we are indebted for a number of Tamil works which otherwise would have been ordinarily inaccessible.

In regard to the late Mr Kanakasabhai's work a criticism was fashionable that his work was 'patriotic'. It was Johnson that said 'Patriotism as

the last resort of the scoundrel' This remark of the great Doctor may have had its application in his time and may not be altogether without it in other times The late Mr Kanakasabhai might have let his patriotism get the better of his judgment on occasions I have carefully tried to avoid laying myself open to such a heavy charge My trouble has been the difficulty of making facts already known agree with those we may arrive at This is a test not always applied in recent investigations and both the statement of facts so-called, and the suppressing of those that may be inconvenient, have in some cases gone together I have tried scrupulously to avoid both, though both errors of omission and commission are possible Too much has been attempted to be made of epigraphical evidence recently, and the late Mr Venkayya's name was quoted against me in the connection I had known the late Mr Venkayya for near a score of years before his lamented death, and I may even say that I am obliged to him for a part of the inspiration that ultimately led me to this field of work Mr Venkayya was in substantial agreement with me in regard to the general position, but he had his doubts as to the Śilappadikāram and Manimākhalaī being of the same age I am almost certain that had he lived now, he would have accepted, the con-

clusions I have arrived at I leave the reader to judge for himself in regard to these conclusions, all I wish to state here is that I have not allowed 'patriotism' to take command of evidence.

In regard to the evidence of this body of material a few words may usefully be said here. The whole collection of literature that goes by the collective name 'Sangam Works,' is of the nature of anthologies with few exceptions. They were occasional poems, the objects of which were generally the celebration of the achievements of patrons. Having regard to this character of theirs they are sometimes very outspoken, but generally they shew a tendency to 'add another hue unto the rainbow'. It is, however, easily possible to allow for the panegyrist in the poet. These poems fall into two classes according to the conventions of Tamil Rhetoric. Those relating to the 'field of action' are direct and connect themselves with specific events and incidents in the life of the patron. Those 'dealing with emotion' are less direct in regard to the points of reference, but they have to celebrate something connected with the achievements of the actual patron addressed or that of his ancestors. Judiciously used the latter provide material as valuable as the former does. The only comparison possible in respect of these is the pre-

Homeric lays or the bardic tales of the days of chivalry in Europe, or even India. There are about twenty collections that will go into this class. Of these all but two of the more important have been printed. The others remain yet to be published.

In the use of this wealth of material, which undoubtedly is of the nature of contemporary evidence, what is required is such a general study as would give an idea of the 'general lie of the land' before specific use of the material is attempted. Much of the work that is generally done suffers from a want of this preliminary equipment. In the following pages I have had it before me all the time to avoid this. How far I have achieved success, it is not for me to say.

I take advantage of this preface to make clear two points in the work which seem ambiguous. On p. 48 Pinna Timma is referred to as the grandson of Ramaraja. This latter is likely to be understood as the Ramaraja who fell at Talikota. The next following sentences seem to confirm this impression. Both Pinna Timma and Rama of Talikota were alike grandsons of another Rama Raja, who served with distinction under Narasa and his son Vira—Narasimha. Pinna Timma and his brother Vittala were first cousins of Ramaraja, and conducted the

## PREFACE

expedition to the South and organised the Madura Province under Sadasiva and Ramaraja. The next point calling for remark here is on p 223 where the first sentence, beginning on this page, refers to the absence of mention of Pattinī in the poem under discussion. It is quite likely that this was due to the fact that this poem was written before Śenguttuvan's northern invasion and the building of the temple of Pattinī which came after the 50th year of his reign, when the others of his achievements discussed had become well known,—(vide Śilappadikāram canto XXVII ll 118 128 & ll 165-175)

I have the greatest pleasure here in acknowledging my obligations to the Syndicate of the Madras University for having sanctioned the expenses of copying for my use the Ahanānūru manuscript in the Government Manuscripts Library, to Rai Sahib H Krishna Sastrigal for his kindness in lending me the impressions and the office transcripts of two valuable Pāṇḍya grants namely the Vōlvikkudi grant, and the larger Sinnamanur Plates, and to Pandit Maha Swaminatha Aiyar for having been at the trouble to copy and supply me with two of the valuable poems in the collection from his excellently collated text of the Ahanānūru. I am equally obliged to Mr M K Srinivasa Aiyangar, the Proprietor of the Modern Printing Works, for having

cheerfully undertaken the publication of this work, and for having done it so well, putting the work through the Press in less than three weeks. One of my research students, Mr N R Sattanathan, B A (Hons) took the trouble of preparing the index and the errata which it was found impossible to avoid owing to the rapidity with which the work went through the Press. I acknowledge with pleasure my indebtedness to him for these good offices.

MADRAS, }  
*1st March 1918* } S KRISHNASWAMI AYYANGAR



# CONTENTS

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	PAGE.
RESEARCH IN INDIAN HISTORY ..	1
THE VALUE OF LITERATURE	33
SOUTH INDIA A DISTINCT ENTITY	59
MAURYAN INVASION OF SOUTH INDIA	81
THE DAWN OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA	104
CHRONOLOGY TAMIL LITERATURE	161
THE AGE OF PARANAR	211
TALAIYALANGANAT-TUP-PANDYAN .	240
ASTRONOMICAL &O CONSIDERATIONS	287
APPENDIX ...	331
CONCLUSION	349





# INTRODUCTORY

## I

### RESEARCH IN INDIAN HISTORY

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#### WHAT HISTORY IS

'History is fable agreed upon' was how history was understood at one time when the idea of history primarily as a piece of literature held sway. We have since gone a long way from that position. Without attempting to set forth what history is, a task which baffled the genius of far greater men than I am, I may make an extract from one of the leading thinkers of the day on matters germane thereto, to gain an idea of what is actually understood by the term. Lord Morley has it in his *Notes on Politics and History*, 'History, in the great conception of it, has often been compared to a mountain chain seen far off in a clear sky, where the peaks seem linked towards one another towards

## INTRODUCTORY

the higher crest of the group. An ingenious and learned writer the other day amplified this famous image, by speaking of a set of volcanic islands heaving themselves out of the sea, at such angles and distances that only to the eye of a bird, and not to a sailor cruising among them, would they appear as the heights of one and the same submerged range. The sailor is the politician. The historian, without prejudice to monographic exploration in intervening valleys and ascending slopes, will covet the vision of the bird.

### SHORTCOMINGS OF HISTORICAL STUDY

Discussing the distinction between ancient and modern history on this basis, Lord Morley passes on to some of the shortcomings of historical study at the present time, and makes the following observations commenting on specialization. "We may find comfort in the truth that though excess of specialization is bad, to make sciolism into a system is worse. In reading history it is one common fault to take too short measure of the event, to mistake some early scene in

the play as if it were the fifth act, and so conceive the plot all amiss. The event is only comprehended in its fullest dimensions, and for that the historic recorder, like or unlike the actor before him, *needs insight and imagination.*" Further on, the same great authority says - 'All agree that we have no business to seek more from the past than the very past itself. Nobody disputes with Cicero when he asks - "Who does not know that it is the first law of history not to dare a word that is false? Next, not to shrink from a word that is true. No partiality, no grudge." Though nobody disputes the obvious answers, have a majority of historical practitioners complied?'

### HISTORY OF HINDU INDIA

These extracts are quite enough to indicate on the one hand what history is according to the most enlightened modern opinion and on the other, what difficulties confront a labourer—a journeyman labourer—in the vast fields of that history in India as yet but little explored. Even from the coveted height of the eagle if one casts his eyes upon the

## INTRODUCTORY

History of Hindu India one feels—one hardly sees enough even of the volcanic islands, and the few that he might be able to see, one feels he sees but too dimly through the mist of age and increasing distance. It is notorious that India has but little history of her own.

### WANT OF CHRONOLOGY

It was the illustrious historian of India, Elphinstone, that observed in 1839 that, in regard to Indian History, 'no date of a public event can be fixed before the invasion of Alexander, and no connected relation of the national transaction can be attempted until after the Muhammadan conquest' Cowell extended the application of this caution to the whole of the Hindu Period, writing as he did in 1866. During the next half century we have advanced from this position a long way indeed, and VINCENT A. SMITH'S *Early History of India* is the most substantial vindication of the possibility of compiling a connected history of Hindu India, but even so much advance does not invalidate the first part of Elphinstone's dictum.

# RESEARCH IN INDIAN HISTORY

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## AN OXFORD CHAIR FOR INDIAN HISTORY ONLY BRITISH CONNECTION

It is nearly half a century since, that the first attempt was made at Oxford to institute a chair or something near it, for the study of Indian History ; but the work of this foundation was, however, limited to the history of the British connection with India. The inaugural address delivered in January 1914 by the present occupant of this position, Rev William Holden Hutton, B D, contains the following appeal anent this question. He (the Reader) is instructed by statute to lecture on "The Rise, Growth and Organization of the British Power in India." This leads me to say what I think very much needs saying to-day. It is a grievous weakness in the University's provision for learning that there is nothing done for the study of Indian History in ancient and mediæval times. I should like to direct the attention of those who have the control of the Chancellor's Fund to this strange omission. A period of the world's history of extraordinary interest and of really enormous importance is entirely neglected in

## INTRODUCTORY

our provision for learning, education and research. It is true that we have distinguished scholars who have, from time to time, dealt with a part of this subject, such as Professor Macdonnell and Mr. Vincent A. Smith, but the former has already a subject so wide that only his knowledge and energy could adequately deal with it, while the latter has, I deeply regret to say, no official position in our midst.

### NO PROVISION FOR GENERAL INDIAN STUDIES

Purely Indian History, with its literature and philosophy, Indian Geography, historical and descriptive, (except so far as I am told to deal with it) a subject of extraordinary fascination in itself, Indian archaeology, are unprovided for in this University. In spite of the generosity which created, and has, from time to time, enriched the Indian Institute, it still fails to play the important part it might play, and was intended to play, in the education at Oxford. What the Chancellor of the University said in 1909 is, I am afraid, still true.

## RESEARCH IN INDIAN HISTORY

### THE INDIAN INSTITUTE

'The Institute has not in any appreciable degree provided a meeting-ground for the East and West, or a place of social intercourse between English and Indian students. Its Museum has failed 'to bring together a typical collection of objects suited to educational purposes and sufficiently complete to give a fair idea of the industrial occupations, domestic and religious customs of the people subject to our rule,' or 'to present a fair epitome of India, eminently attractive not only to indologists, but to ethnologists and anthropologists of all nationalities.' The scheme of constant lectures by distinguished Anglo-Indian administrators and Orientalists which started under happy auspices, has fallen into desuetude. The Institute possesses no permanent endowment, and is ill-provided in respect of staff and attendance, besides being quite unable to extend its sphere of influence.'



## INTRODUCTORY

### THE DEMAND OF THE GREATEST OF OXFORD HISTORIANS (BISHOP STUBBS)

I believe that this is largely due to the fact that we have still left unheeded the declaration of the greatest of Oxford historians, made so long ago as 1876, when Mr. Sidney Owen had been teaching Indian History in Oxford for eight years. 'At the present moment we want', then said the Regius Professor of Modern History (after proclaiming another need which is still, as I think most disastrously, unsatisfied).—

"We want a permanent chair of Indian History. The labours of our friend, the present Indian Reader, have shown us how thoroughly that study, the importance of which can scarcely be over-rated by Englishmen, falls in with the current of our University work. I say a permanent chair, because that is a subject of permanent necessity, not a subject like palæography or numismatology, in which the labours of one good professor may serve for two or three generations, and the endowment of the man is of equal importance with the endowment of the chair or study."

That demand of Dr Stubbs, made nearly forty years ago, is not yet met. I appeal to those whose interest in India is real, who desire that her history should be fully known and rightly understood, who desire that she should be recognised in her greatness among the nations, to Indian princes, and to Europeans who have made fortunes in India, to provide for the creation of a Professorship of Indian History in the University which is already so clearly linked, and could be linked more closely, to the Indian Empire

#### THE SAME NEED FOR INDIA

This was the demand made for Oxford forty years ago, already provided with some kind of equipment to meet this particular need. Thanks to the Universities Act of 1904 and the enlightened generosity of the Government of India it has become possible for us now to think of doing something to reclaim that part of the history of our country of which the distant Oxford Professors of History shewed themselves so solicitous nearly half a century ago

## THE MATERIAL AVAILABLE FOR MEETING THIS NEED

The difficulties that have to be overcome in any work of research in this field are many and require talents of the highest order over a wide field of study. Broadly speaking the sources of Indian History can be grouped into three broad classes, namely —

*I Indian Literature (Traditional and Historical),*

*II Foreign Literature, chiefly the works of travellers, &c,*

*III Archæology, Monumental, Numismatic and Epigraphic*

### I INDIAN LITERATURE

The first of these classes falls naturally into two groups, namely, (a) Ordinary literature, embodying traditional history in regard to striking incidents and personalities. These find casual mention in works with no historical object of any kind and will be of invaluable service in the construction of history. The chief difficulty that besets the subject here is the absence of any chronological clue.

which many of the classical works of literature want generally, either in Sanskrit or in our Dravidian Vernaculars. There are some works which, either in the preface or in a colophon at the end of the work, give invariably the name and ancestors of the author, sometimes also the name and ancestry similarly of the patron, and occasionally the date of composition or completion of the work. Where this clue is available the work is of some value to the historian—not generally for history as it is ordinarily understood, Political History—but as throwing some side-light upon a social, religious or other feature of general history.

#### ARRANGEMENT UPON A CHRONOLOGICAL SCHEME

The greater part of the literature of the country has first of all to be carefully studied critically and arranged on a well-planned chronological scheme. This is true alike of Sanskrit and Vernacular literature—the only difference being that in regard to Sanskrit some work has already been done, while in regard to the Dravidian languages which are of material importance to the history of this

part of the country, the work has hardly received attention except in very rare instances. To the aspiring historian of South India this will prove the first preliminary spadework essential to any undertaking. He has unfortunately to deal with not any one language but with three, four or five languages, according to the period and the locality to which he directs his ambition and his attention. It is here co-operation and combination, in the shape of a school of workers in history is required, each one of whom limiting his ambition to contributing to the main result without special recognition or reward for each brick he might have directly contributed to make.

### PROFESSEDLY HISTORICAL WORKS

The next department of the literature of the country that has here to be taken into consideration is the purely historical literature—a department in which, so far as the available materials go—India is peculiarly weak, so much so that we often hear it said that the faculty for history is utterly absent in India. Bearing in mind that history as we

understand the term now is practically the work of nineteenth-century Europe, we can still say with justice that Europe, is well provided with historical literature for many ages and many countries. So it is even with China. In regard to India we can hardly say the same, and when we limit our vision to the south we can almost say there is none such at all. The absence of professed histories does not necessarily imply the absence of historical material in literature. There is much of that kind of ore that can be mined in literature, but it requires the smelting furnace of criticism, with plenty of oxydising material in the shape of chronological data from other sources, and slag of confirmatory evidence to separate the facts from the figments of imagination in which these get embedded. Much of this is true even of the few professed histories that we possess. The typical examples of such are Kalhana's *Rājataranginī*, Bāṇa's *Harsha Chaitam* and Bilhana's *Vikramāṅkadeva Chaitam* for Sanskrit, the *Konguḍeś'a Rājākkal* in Tamil and various other smaller historical pieces found

## INTRODUCTORY

in the Mackenzie Manuscripts collection. There is the Rājāvalīkathe in Kanarese, and the various historical chronicles of Buddhist history that we have for Ceylon

### THEIR VALUE AS HISTORICAL MATERIAL

Various other smaller compositions might be brought under this class, as they deal often with topics contemporaneous with the writers themselves. These, however, and most other of the works already referred to had not the writing of history as their object, and would be more liable to the charge contained in the quotation with which I started that 'History is fable agreed upon'. On the whole these two connected sources do offer to the critical student valuable historical material, neglect of which would make any history of the country, of a higher conception or lower, almost impossible.

### THE WORK THAT LIES AHEAD

Without entering into any detailed description of the various works of a historical character, or attempting to appraise their relative worth as contributing to history, I feel called

upon to point out that the work that lies ahead here, almost immediately in front of us, is a critical examination of these, and their presentation in the form of a connected description, so as ultimately to lead up to the writing of a hand-book of literature for each of the literatures of these Dravidian languages on the lines of similar works for European languages we have in such number and variety. When this is done it will be found that the amplitude of the material available for history is much more than we imagine at first-sight

## II FOREIGN SOURCES OF INDIAN HISTORY

### GREEK

Passing on to the next division, 'Foreign sources of Indian History' we have here a very large number of contributories in regular succession beginning almost with the Father of History, Herodotus. For Northern India we have a number of Greek accounts of varying degrees of value historically from the age of Herodotus to the days of Asoka almost, and when this begins to fail, Chinese sources begin to appear, about the beginning of the



Christian era Of the Greek sources I may just mention besides Herodotus, Ktesias, Megasthenes and Arrian, not to mention Quinctus Curtius and Appollonious of Tyana.

### CHINESE

Of Chinese sources there is the Chinese Father of History Ssu-ma-ch'ien in the first century B C and from that time a large number of travellers came almost up to the Muhammadan conquest Of these we need only mention the well-known ones, Fa-hien at the beginning of the fifth century and Huen Thsang in the middle of the seventh Excepting this last none of the foreign sources cited above have anything but an occasional reference to South India There is besides the recently discovered Tibetan sources which have not yet been adequately worked up to be of use to the student

### FOR SOUTH INDIA

Under this head South India is not without its own share of illumination from outside. Megasthenes has a few references about the south There is the Geographer Pliny, then

comes in chronological order the unknown author of the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, and then Ptolemy. Past this period we are able to derive some valuable information from Hiuen T'sang. Last of all there is Marco Polo. For periods later than this we have the Muhammadan travellers, some of them are of very great value, such as Ibn Batutah and Abdur Razak. There are besides a number of other European travellers that came to some part of the southern coast or the interior, Nicolo-dei-Conti who was a contemporary of Deva Raya I, Vaithema, the Portuguese traders Nuniz and Paes, and others.

#### THESE SHED BUT INTERMITTENT LIGHT

With very few exceptions the light that these throw upon the history of the country is anything but continuous, and often the information that we gain of the best among them can be regarded as of value only when we have other sources of information to control them. All the same we owe it to them that we have recovered a few bright chapters of South Indian History, and we must acknow-

ledge our obligations to the disinterested labour of European savants to whom entirely is due the credit of having made these available to us

### MUHAMMADAN HISTORIANS

I have so far not made any mention of the Muhammadan historians as a class. For the later period of Hindu History of South India these historians are of considerable importance as outside sources, though hitherto they were the only sources. I class them as outside, for none of them, of design, write the history of any State of Hindu India. Such reference as they make are only incidental and bring them in in the course of the history of the particular Muhammadan State or States whose history they attempt to write. These again have been made available for use by us by an elder generation of European scholars, though there is still room for good scholarly work left upon these

## ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOURCES

## (I) MONUMENTAL

We come last of all to the sources, archaeological. These have been divided into (1) monumental, (2) numismatic and (3) epigraphic.

These monuments in the shape of buildings, temples and structures of various kinds throw very considerable light upon the religion, art and civilization in general of the particular period to which they belong. They also let us in into the secrets of history in regard to the various influences, foreign or local, that may have had operation in the production of these monuments. To be able to study these monuments, these monuments must exist. So work in this branch of archæology as a necessary preliminary, takes the character of an organisation for the preservation of those monuments that are visible, then it requires an organisation to carry on work in search for new monuments, and the exposition of those that may be available for study.

## PRIVATE EFFORT IMPOSSIBLE IN THIS LINE

In a vast country like ours and having regard to the character and condition of these monuments as they are, this becomes particularly a branch of study which does not lend itself at all to private work in regard to its first branch, the second branch of it, research work in monuments, may to some extent be done by private workers but even in this branch organised work is so necessary for utility that it is only rich societies or Governments that can undertake the conservation and research work satisfactorily, where the latter involve as in the case of the Taxila excavations, or excavations carried on at present at Pāṭaliputra, a large outlay of expenditure. After a period of neglect, work upon this branch was undertaken by General Cunningham in the sixties of the last century as Director-General, but his work was confined to Northern and Central India. A decade later came on an expansion under Burgess when the whole of India was included for work. In either case these officers and their staff confined themselves to research work alone

which is embodied in the volumes of Archaeological Survey XXII by the first, and XXXIII by the second. A first shy attempt was made at conservation of existing monuments in 1881, and ultimately, thanks to the exertion of various influences, a more comprehensive scheme was put into force at the beginning of the new century, and we are now on a further step forward in the development of archaeological work as the Government of India Resolution on the subject indicates.

#### NUMISMATICS. LARGELY PRIVATE EFFORT SO FAR

It is in the second branch of archaeological work that private effort is quite possible to a very large extent, and a great deal of work has already been done. There are very good collections of coins, seals, &c, in the various museums in India and elsewhere. They have all been carefully studied and catalogued, in addition to much private work that has already been done. It is possible that this may turn out to be a costly fad to an individual but under proper direction it need not be quite so costly at all.

INVALUABLE TO THE CHRONOLOGY OF  
PARTICULAR PERIODS

Costly or otherwise it is a very useful fact and many parts of Indian History have become possible only by the study of coins, and several others have received much needed chronological assistance therefrom

EPIGRAPHY

Lastly we come to epigraphy, which for the part of the country with which we are directly concerned, is the most important of these sources, and which has reclaimed to us lost history in regard to various periods, localities and dynasties. For the period anterior to A. D. 400 these records obtained so far, are not very many for South India. The total for the whole of India, both North and South, is about 1100 to 1200

RECORDS PREPONDERATE IN NUMBER IN SOUTH  
INDIA FOR PERIODS AFTER A. D. 400

For the period on this side of A. D. 400 the number already brought to notice up to 1906, when the late Professor Kielhorn compiled his indexes to the inscriptions, is about 700 for

Northern India and 1090 for the South. There have since been added to these the yearly, collections of which it is only a comparatively small number that has yet been placed before the public in a shape to be dealt with in that manner.

### LARGE NUMBERS OF THESE RECORDS

Dr Fleet, one of the greatest authorities in Indian Epigraphy, has it, 'And, whereas new records are every year being freely obtained in Northern India it is known there is in Southern India a wealth of material the extent of which can hardly yet be gauged.' According to the same authority the collection of transcripts made by Sir Walter Elliott was 595 from the Kanarese country, besides a considerable number from the Telugu Districts. These are placed in the libraries of the Royal Asiatic Society, London, and the University of Edinburgh. Dr Hultzsch had collected and edited about 300 inscriptions in the first two volumes of South Indian inscriptions, and about an equal number has been added since to the same publication by the issue of one



more part of volume II and two of Vol. III, by his successors, the late Mr. Venkayya and Rai Sahib H Krishna Sastri. Mr. Rice brought out about 9000 inscriptions in the *Epigraphia Carnāṭaka* and his successor, Mr R Narasimhachariar, has added a considerable number to these, though he has not published them in the same form as his predecessor had done. Dr Fleet has collected about 1000 and placed them all in the Bombay Museum. He further states that 'the southernmost parts of Dharwar which abound with such materials, and some parts of Belgaum and Bijapur Districts, and the Nizam's Dominions still remain to be explored. And a great mass of material from the eastern parts of Southern India.'

### THEIR VALUE

Apart from this copiousness these inscriptions have a historical value which is all their own. They vary in substance from the simple record of the death of a rural hero who fell fighting in a cattle raid or of his widow's immolation on the pyre of her husband, to a detailed account of a battle or a treaty. If it

happens to be a donative offering to a temple or a Brahman it not merely gives genealogical details of the donor and donee, but very often elaborate details of rural administration. Sometimes we come upon records of how justice was administered, in these very documents. In regard to the simpler details of history these records describe them concisely and accurately, and being not deliberately set out as history are all the more reliable. A great number of these records are precisely dated in some one era or another, or in regnal years of the sovereign for the time being. Thus they give us an amount of information of such a character that ordinary histories even of a modern character will not usually give us, so that it is possible to construct from the inscriptions alone something more than mere political history. Thanks to the exertions of various scholars of the passing generation, we have all the various Indian eras in use equated to the Christian era and tables constructed to give equivalent dates.

## CO-ORDINATION OF WORK DESIRABLE

These records, available to us in such large numbers, have made it possible to compile a political history of India from the first century B C. onwards with sufficient fullness up to the fourth century A D and with greater fullness afterwards. But to make the best use of these records and get them to yield all the results they are capable of yielding work in this line will have to go hand in hand with work in other departments of research 'in which hardly a beginning has been made, beyond a preliminary treatment, in detached writings, of details which will have to be hereafter brought together and handled on broader lines in connected and more easily accessible works'

FLEET'S TWO DESIDERATA (1) RESEARCH IN  
MONUMENTS

Dr. Fleet calls for two lines of work of which we have promise, one being taken up systematically and in a more liberal spirit than heretofore, in the Government of India Resolution on Archæology, namely research

work in monuments by excavation. This is very necessary to supplement the rather meagre information available for periods anterior to A D 320

### (II) REVISED CORPUS OF INSCRIPTIONS

The next desideratum to which he calls attention is the revision and republication of the Epigraphic material available in a single corpus, *Corpus Inscriptionem Indicarum* of which a beginning was made in the only two volumes so far published, Vol I, The Inscriptions of Asoka by General Sir Alexander Cunningham, and Volume III, The Gupta Inscriptions, by Dr Fleet himself. The need certainly is very great

### COLLATION OF OTHER MATERIALS FOR HISTORY

Along with this work has to go on work upon the collation of all historical material available in literature, numismatics, art works, &c, and unless all of these are examined carefully and the material that can be drawn from them made available in a form accessible to students of history, no historical work proper would be possible This will involve

great labour in the literatures of four or five languages, in thousands of inscriptions in all these languages, besides the monuments, coins and works of art generally

### SYMPATHETIC STUDY OF INDIAN ART

It is a hopeful sign of the times that these last are coming in for their share of attention at the hands of some individuals and Governments, and what is more they are coming to be studied with more of that sympathy which hitherto was notoriously wanting. In the words of Justice Woodroffe, "It has been the fashion amongst European art-critics to decry the merits of Brahmanical sculpture on the ground of the alleged monstrosities of the Hindu *pauranic* conceptions, which, it has been said, are incapable of artistic treatment. The examples collected in this volume\* will, it is hoped, help to dispel such misconceptions and to refute the unjust criticisms which they have engendered, and will further a juster appreciation of the fact that Indian Sculpture is not a freak of Asiatic barbarism, but is a

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\* South Indian Bronzes by O. C. Gangooly.

worthy representative of a school of æsthetic performance as logical, articulate and highly developed as those of any country in Europe, ancient or modern ' .

Vincent A. Smith's "History Fine Art in India and Ceylon," Havell's "Ancient and Medieval Architecture," Gopinatha Rao's "Hindu Iconography," Gangooly's "South Indian Bronzes" and a more systematic work upon a narrower field of work, only the Tamil country, namely "South Indian Architecture and Iconography" by Professor Jouveau-Dubreuil of Pondicherry, all works of recent years do but indicate the rising interest in this line of work

### UNIVERSITIES SHOW INTEREST

It is therefore none too soon that the University of Madras, along with a few others of her sister Universities, resolved to utilise the liberal annual grant of the Government of India for starting a school of Indian studies by instituting Professorships and Readerships in Indian History and Languages having reference to South India chiefly. The success

or failure of this scheme depends upon the interest it can evoke and the co-operation it can enlist from among the *alumni* of the University—past and present

In calling for sympathetic interest and co-operation particularly from the University students here, I cannot do better than quote from Professor Maitland the words in which he once expressed the needs of historical study, 'needs which are nowhere more explicit and evident than in regard to India'

'More co-operation, more organisation, more and better criticism, more advice for beginners, are needed. And the need, if not met, will increase. History is lengthening and widening, and deepening. It is lengthening at both ends, for while modern States in many parts of the world are making history at a bewilderingly rapid rate, what used to be called ancient history is no longer, by any means, the ancientest, Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, and even primeval man, are upon our hands. And history is widening. Could we neglect India, China and Japan, there would be still America, Australia, Africa, as well as

Europe, demanding that their stories should be told, and finding men to tell them well or to tell them badly. And history is deepening. We could not, if we would, be satisfied with the battles and the protocols, the alliances and the intrigues. Literature and art, religion and law, rents and prices, creeds and superstitions have burst the political barrier and are no longer to be expelled. The study of interactions and interdependences is but just beginning and no one can foresee the end. *There is much to be done by schools of history* there will be more to be done every year.'

Co-operation in this particular line is easier for us as the languages that have to be mastered are many and the knowledge that would be really useful is a deep knowledge of one or more of these. The other technical details in the present state of work in the subject are admittedly easy of acquisition. Indian talent comes in very handy in archæological work and ought to be offered largely and accepted liberally. It is only then that the school of Indian studies will become a realised



ambition. I leave it in the hands of the younger members of this audience either to realise this ambition or face the alternative of the eternal want of historic sense.

## II

### THE VALUE OF LITERATURE IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF INDIAN HISTORY

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It is a notorious fact that Indian literature has few professed histories, and the inference seems warranted that the historical faculty received no development in the country. History, as we understand it, is entirely a product of the nineteenth century even in Europe. Works which constitute good material for history have been many, whatever their shortcomings from the point of view of the modern historian. It is in the sense of professed histories which may be subjected to criticism and used as material, that histories are wanting in India.

So the problem of constructing the history of India as a whole, or of any part of it, is subject to this additional defect. Defective it may be and much more so than in European

countries Still there is ample material yet left, despite much vandalism which may yield good results if exploited systematically. Historical material in India as elsewhere, may be grouped into three classes —

- (I) *Archæological (including architecture)*
- (II) *Epigraphical (including numismatics)*
- (III) *Literature*

Of these the first goes back to the earliest times reached in this country by historical research What can be gathered from this source is, however, scanty though reaching to the earliest antiquity The second does not go beyond the period of the Asoka Inscriptions For periods anterior to this, we are thrown upon literature only, both Vedic and Buddhistic With respect to South India also archæological evidence may take us farther back, but the epigraphical does not go back beyond the beginning of the Christian Era except for a few Asoka and Sātavāhana records Whether literature will take us beyond this limit may well be regarded doubtful, as we are at present, but careful research in this direction may take us past this limit

and may yield us results beyond our expectations. I have not set myself to inquire here whether it is so, nor whether all literary evidence has been brought to bear on historical research. I shall only try to show that the inquiry will not be in vain if it is made.

This inquiry necessarily leads us to the question of languages. For any work of research concerning India, Sanskrit is indispensable. This is clear from what we know of the pre-Buddhistic period of Indian history. When we come to deal with South India, Tamil becomes equally essential. Of the other Dravidian languages, Telugu does not take its available literature much anterior to the ninth century A D, and this literature seems to be modelled upon Sanskrit entirely. Kanarese has certainly a more ancient literature. A work of the ninth century undoubtedly is the *Kavirājamārga* of Nripatunga. If a work of poetics like this had been written in the ninth century, we might presume that there was an amount of anterior literature to require this. Malayalam seems to have grown out of Tamil in the early cen-

times of the Christian Era. But Tamil which, according to some, is the mother of these three, goes back to a far greater antiquity. It has a wealth of literature for particular periods which is worth study on scientific lines. This body of literature, independent of Sanskrit and yet so closely interwoven with it, deserves well of those who wish to be among the educated of their country's sons. It may not be all who can afford to study it, but those who can ought not to neglect to do so. How is this vast literature, both Sanskrit and Dravidian, to be exploited to any purpose, and what is likely to be the utility of such exploitation for history?

I began with the statement that history depends upon archæology, epigraphy and literature for its materials. The work on the first two has been considered to belong to the province of Government, for it is beyond the resources of private work, though private agency may do much if facilities are provided. Work upon the third is so far left entirely to the patriotic lovers of literature. It is not literature as literature that is my concern

here, but literature so far as it can be of use for the making of history.

That literature can provide for history needs no proof now. The study of the literature of Pāli, the vernacular of a part of Northern India in the centuries before Christ, opened to us a fresh vista into the domain of the history of ancient India. Will the Dravidian languages similarly open another vista? It is this question I shall attempt to answer here, confining my observations to Tamil literature, the oldest and the most voluminous of these southern tongues, as they are at present. That a systematic study of this literature will yield results of great value even where one least expects it, I can illustrate from the following incident in the life of Rāmānuja, the Vaiṣṇava apostle.

Tradition states, and the *Guruparamparas* (histories of apostolic succession) record, that Rāmānuja constructed the temple at the town of Tirupati, and enshrined the image of Govindarāja there. This image was believed to have been the image of Govindarāja at Chidambaram, pulled out of the temple and cast into the sea by a certain Chola king, called

Kūmīkanta by the Vaishnavas, a persecuting Chola. So far as I know at present, there seems to be no inscription bearing upon this question, and the matter was believed to be traditional and nothing more. It was asserted in a court of law that the existence of the Vishnu shrine at Chidambaram was due to the pious fraud of a Vaishnava Brahman, who planted the image of Vishnu over night, and duped the people, who woke up one morning to find the image of Vishnu in the Śaiva (Holy of Holies). If the witness himself believed in it, as in honesty we are bound to grant he did, he must have been a credulous person indeed. We are not concerned with his credulity or otherwise, but we are with the credibility of the tale. Stanza 86<sup>1</sup> of the Tiruchchirram-balakkōvai of Māṇikkavāśagar states in the words of the devotee that Vishnu was lying in the court yard of the temple at Chidambaram supplicating Śiva, when, in response

1 புரங்கடர் தானடி காண்பான் புவிவிண்டு புககறியா  
 திரங்கிடென ருயென நிரபபதனை வீரடிக கென்னிரண்டு  
 காககடர் தானொன்று காட்ட மறறுங்குதுங் காட்டிடென்று  
 வரங்கிடர் தானநிலை யமபல முனநிலை மாயவனே.

to Vishṇu's prayer, after fruitlessly penetrating the earth to discover the feet of Śiva, he displayed one foot, that he might show the other as well. This is a clever description of the relative positions and postures of the two deities in the temple. Natēsa is in his self-forgetful dance with his right foot lifted up. Govindarāja is in his bhōgaśayana (reclining posture)

Kulasēkhara Ālvā states regarding the same Govindarāja that Vishṇu was recumbent on a throne, with the three thousand Brahmans chanting his praise in the Chitrakūṭa of Tillai city, surrounded by cool and shady gardens, smiling with flowers and tender shoots

Next comes what Tirumangaī Ālvar says about the same —

The first extract <sup>2</sup> simply indicates that a

2 செந்நளிராவாய மலர்நகைசோ செழுந்தண சோலைத்  
திலலைநகாத திருச்சிதர கூடந் தன்னு  
நாதணாக னொருமூவா யிரவ ரேத்த  
வணிமணியா சனத்தமாநத் வமமான ருனே

3 பைம்பொன்னு முத்தும மணியுங் கொணாநது  
படைமன்னவா பலலவா கோண்ப ணிநத்  
செம்பொன்மணி மாடங்கன சூழ்நத் திலலைத்  
திருச்சிதர கூடஞ்சென்று சோயினகனே



Pallava king made some costly dedications to the temple. The second <sup>4</sup> that Vishnu was in a lying posture on his serpent couch The third <sup>5</sup> that the three thousand of Tillai worshipped, according to orthodox rights, the God of Gods

Thus, then, in the days of the two Ālvārs and Mānikkavāśagar, the Vishnu shrine occupied the position that it does now Let us proceed then to a later period, the period of the later Cholas The Chola decline may be dated as commencing with the death of Kulōttunga Chola I He was succeeded by his son Vikramachola, and he by his son Kulōttunga II, who was succeeded by Raja Rāja II The poet called Ottakkūttan, there are reasons for believing, was a contemporary

4 ஒருமா கடலுட கிடந்தா னுவந்த  
கவைநா வரவி னனைப்பனளி வினமேல  
திருமால திருமங்கை யோடாடு திலகைத்  
திருச்சிதர கூடம

5 மூவா விரநான மறையானா நாளும  
முறையால வணங்கவ வணங்காய சோதித்  
தேவாதி தேவன திகழ்கின்ற திலகைத்  
திருச்சிதர கூடம

of all the three Among the works ascribed to him are three ulās, as they are called, pieces of conventional composition celebrating a patron as he passes in triumph through the streets of his capital, appealing to his vanity by elaborate descriptions of the effects produced upon the lady folk of the city I take the following extracts from the *Kulōttunga-cholanulā* <sup>6</sup> and *Rājārājanulā* <sup>7</sup> regarding the Vishnu shrine at Chidambaram These two passages indicate in no uncertain terms that, in carrying out the renovation of the temple, Kulōttunga found the opportunity to get rid of the 'old little gods' which were obnoxious to his piety That the Vishnu shrine was what was particularly offensive to this pious

6 புவனி முழுதுடைய பொற்றொடியுந் தானும்  
அவனி சுராசுருதி யாராபப்—நவநிதிதோயந்  
தேததற கருங்கடவு னெல்லையிலா நைதக  
கூததைக களிகூரக குமபிட்டுப்—போற்றினமேற்  
றில்லைந் கீருமன்றின் முன்றிற்—சிலுதெய்வத்  
தொல்லைக் துறம்பு தொதக்தேடுத்த  
திருவே திருமலை

7 குடத திருமகுடஞ் குடமயபின—ஓட  
பொன்னிற குயிறறிப புறம்பிற குறம்பனைதது  
முன்னிற் கடல்களில் முழ்துவந்த—சென்னி  
கீருமகள் சீராஜ ராஜன்

devotee is clear from the expression முன்னிற கடலில் முழுகுவித்த, which means 'submerging in the sea, the former house'. This very idea of the author and the same act of his zealous patron find expression in another work, the *Takḥayāgapparaṇ* 8 It is clear then that Kulōttunga II, the grandson of the first of that name, perpetrated this act of pious hostility to the Govindarāja shrine, which led to the establishment by Rāmānuja of the shrine at Tirupati town

Last of all is a Sanskrit extract which lets us know how the Govindarāja temple came to be again where it is at present. It is a quotation from the *Prapaṇṇāmrutam* of a certain Anantārya, a descendent of Āndhrapūrṇa who was a contemporary of Rāmānuja. It is a life of Rāmānuja and his followers at the end of which the author of the life gives his own genealogy. In the course of this pedigree occurs

8 முனற்றிற் கிடந்த கருங்கடல் போய் முன்னைக்கடல்

[புகப்பின்னைத் திலலை

மனறுக கிடங்கண்ட கொண்டல் பெற்ற மரசுத

[மேருவை வாழ்த்துவனே—



Śaivas, this great one in learning restored the Govindarāja temple at Chitrakūta with the assistance of Ramarāya. This Govindarāja thus established by Mahācharya is even yet to be seen at Chidambaram.

These are isolated facts gathered from a number of works, showing no obvious connexion with each other. How are they to be brought together and used to serve the purposes of history?

The first essential to history is chronology. If the facts are not placed in the order in which I have placed them, they will be unintelligible, and to place them in this order more is required than mere individual ingenuity. If the last fact of the above series could only be placed before its predecessor, the contention of the recent litigants would find some justification. Unfortunately, however, for them I am not marshalling here facts in law for a judge and jury, but facts of history for a critical student. The investigation of the historian ought first of all to be chronological.

The date of Māṇikkavāṣagar cannot yet be regarded as a settled fact of history. Varying dates are ascribed to him, as often with as without evidence. Some refer him to the fifth century A D, others to the ninth century, others again to an antiquity not definitely ascertainable. That Sundaramūrtināyanār does not include him among the Tirutondar is one fact all are agreed upon, and that he was a contemporary of a Varagunapāndyan is also tradition accepted on all hands. The epigraphist would keep him to the Varaguna of the eighth century after Christ. The literary critic sees quotations and adaptation from Māṇikkavāṣagar in the works of the earlier adiyārs of the Śaiva hagiology. That his works were well known in the thirteenth century, and the work that readily challenged comparison with those of Māṇikkavāṣagar was the Tiruvoyimolī of Nammālvār are in evidence in the following lines<sup>10</sup> of the *Satagoparandādi*,

10 துறவா தவாகருந் துறந்தவாக் குஞ்சொல்லவே சுதகரும  
அறவா விவையின கோராயிரம் நிறகவந் தோசிலாபோய்  
மறவா தியாசொன்ன வாசக மாமலட் டாவைப்பறநிக  
சறவாக் கிடப்பரந் கெனபெற வோதன்கள கைவலிபே—

ascribed to Kamban, who, there are good reasons for believing, lived in the twelfth century A D

In this, as is evident, Kamban compares the thousand of Nammālvār to a thousand milch-cows, both to the renounced and to the worldly, and the *Tiruvaśagam* to cows which give no milk. We are not concerned with the judgment here, but only with the fact of the case, although it must be said in passing that this prince of poets in Tamil is far from being a fanatical sectarian, for he says in the *Ramayana*,<sup>11</sup> 'it is impossible to attain salvation for those who dispute in ignorance that Hara is the greater or the world measuring Hari'

Regarding the two Ālvārs the dates are no more fixed than for Mānikkavāśagar. They are both of them anterior to the middle of the eleventh century A D, inscriptions of which date refer to the works of these Ālvārs as

11 அரணதிக ஓலகனநத னரியதின ஂனவுரைகரு

{மறிவி லாகருப

பாகதிசென றடைவரிய பரிசேபோல்

having been held in high esteem One <sup>12</sup> of the decades of Tirumangaiālvār refers to the occupation of Kanchi by a king called Vairamēghan in the following terms The first being, that is in Attabhuyagalam in Kanchi, that was surrounded by the forces and fame of Vanamēghan of long garland and high crown, entitled to the respectful submission of the Pallava, the ruler of the Tondas (people of Tondāmandalam). It is often not noticed that two distinct personages are under reference . the ruler of Kānchi (Tondayarkon)—and another entitled to his allegiance, called *Vanamēghan* This last is in all likelihood the Rāshtrakuta king of the name, and not Dantivarman Pallava, the son of Nandivarman Pallavamalla

The only date so far known for Vairamēgha Dantidurga of the Rāshtrakūta dynasty is A D 754 The latter half of the eighth century A D may, therefore, be taken as the age of Tirumangaiālvār.<sup>13</sup> The earlier

12 மனனவன ஞெண்டையாகோன வண்டஞ்சீன

[முடிமாவை வயிரமேகன

தனவலிதன புகழ்குழந்தக்கசியட்ட புயகரத்தாதி—

13 Vide Chapter XIX of the author's Ancient India



quotations would then refer us to the eighth and ninth centuries A D at the latest for the existence of the Govindarāja temple at Chidambaram

The next batch of references leads to the inference that it was Kulōttunga II, the son of Vikramachola and the father of Rājarāja II A D (*circa*) 1133 to 1150, who uprooted the shrine in his pious work of renovation of the great Śaiva temple This is clear from the quotations themselves which are from the works of a contemporary author

Lastly, the Sanskrit quotation refers the reconstruction to Doddāyācharya through the good offices of a Rāmarāja who ruled after Krishnarāja It was in this connection that this teacher (ācharya) came in contact with Appaiya Dikshita, the great South Indian scholar and philosopher. In his commentary on Vēdānta Dēśika's *Yādavābhyudāyam*, this scholar says that he took up the work of a commentary on this kāvya at the instance of Pinna Timma, grandson of Rāmarāja The Rāmarāja referred to is clearly the one that fell at Talikōta There is nothing very improbable

in Appaiya Dikshita's having been contemporaneous with Doḍḍayācharya or Rāmarāja on the one hand, and with Pinna Timmarāja on the other. Besides the writer of the *Prapan-nāmrtam* itself was a disciple of Kumāratātārya, popularly Kōṭikanyakāḍṇam Tātāchar, whose patron was Vankatapurāya, who ruled till A D 1614. It must therefore be sometime before A D 1565 that the temple was restored.

We are thus able to obtain an account of the vicissitudes of this temple for about five centuries at least. I have taken this as a simple illustration of what historical information can be gained even from apparently unconnected literature. The facts here are all the more reliable, even including the last, as they are mere incidental references. It will now appear that there can be no history without chronology, and the attempts to fix the dates of works and authors, which to many appear absurd, is of the essence of historical research.

What is wanted, therefore, now for historical research is a systematic and organized study of literature, both vernacular and Sa-

krit, in a way that will facilitate work both literary and historical. This work cannot be done by one man all through for his own requirements. He will require the collaboration of a number of others. A student engaged in historical research has to keep himself in close touch with the archæological, epigraphical and literary work that may be going on, and must be something of an archæologist and epigraphist himself, but that any one should be all the three by himself is beyond human possibility in most cases. This is very often recognized, and the two branches are held to be distinct. In point of literature also—I am concerned with literature only as an auxiliary to history—the collection of manuscripts and documents, and the bringing out of good and critical editions of works ought to be regarded as quite a distinct branch. Most editions of the classics published in India till quite recently, both in Sanskrit and the vernaculars, were uncritical editions. It is the Bombay Sanskrit Series, that set the fashion for Sanskrit. Our esteemed countryman, Mahāmahōpādya Swaminatha Aiyar,

has given us a number of remarkably well-edited texts of important Tamil works. The advantages of this kind of editing are quite apparent. The various readings are given for the reader to choose from, the variety of comments are also noted. When this is well and accurately done the text editor has rendered good service to the historian. What then is the utility of such editions? To give only an example or two. The learned editor of the *Śilappadhikāram*, Pundit Swaminatha Aiyar, has taken care to give in a footnote thirteen lines at the beginning of the second canto, found only in one manuscript among those he consulted. He remarks in another place that manuscripts found in the same quarter have been the most reliable in many particulars. These thirteen lines refer to Karikāla as the ruler at the time, and state that the *Pattinappālai* had been dedicated to him by the author, thus confirming the inferable contemporaneity of this ruler with the author of the work. There are references to the same incident in other works but far later in point of time.

Similarly in stanza fourteen of Kālidāsa's *Mēghadūta*, where there is the reference to Dinnāga, it struck me that the interpretation of the whole, as applied to Dinnāgāchārya, was forced, for in the alternative interpretation the commentator Mallinātha has to omit a part of a compound word. The pundits whom I consulted consider that that is no bar to the *slēsha* (double entendre). I understand now from a Bombay edition of the text and commentary that Hēmādri does not countenance the interpretation. The result is that the estimate of Kālidāsa's age based on his contemporaneity with Dinnāga, falls to the ground so far. Hēmādri may be right or Mallinātha, but he who reads with a view to building up a hypothesis in history ought to have an opportunity of knowing both the commentaries. Then he formulates his hypothesis at his own risk.

Further down Mallinātha lays down that the three ślokas which he comments on are interpolations. He does not choose to tell us why he thinks so, though his reasons would have been valuable. There is a great and

important amount of work to be done, in the way of examining critically the texts with a view to distinguish the genuine from the spurious part of it

It is alleged, often with truth, that the historian reads his thoughts and feelings into the writings of the past. This no doubt is a defect that he has to guard himself against. If the record of the past is placed in his hands in an accurate form he ought to have no excuse for making such mistakes. The defect arises from an insufficiency of information which would enable him to form a complete idea of the men and of the period he is dealing with. This is a point that the late Professor Maitland seems to have laid great stress on in the course of his lectures. It is in regard to oaths and the influence that they exercised on truthfulness of the witness that the Professor took occasion to make the remark. This defective appreciation is considerably in evidence among a class of scholars engaged in research work. It is traceable to the importing of our own ideas and the circumstances about us to periods of which we have either no, or have

no means of having, full information To illustrate the position I go back' to the Brhatkathā. The work was written in Paisāchi and appears to have been held in high esteem by successive writers of note in Sanskrit literature, at least from the days of Dandi to the age of the Kāsmīrian Sōmadēva We have four different versions of it as our only source of knowledge of the work The *Kathāsarithsāgara* of Sōmadēva, is professedly a translation, Bṛhatkathāmañjarī is a collection of stories from the Brhatkathā, a third version or collection was obtained from Nepal, and lastly a Tamil translation of it, which is of an antiquity which may be prior to that of the now known Śāngam works Professor Speyer, a Dutch scholar, who has made a critical study of the *Kathāsarithsāgara* has, on the strength of the supernatural powers ascribed to Nāgārjuna in the work, referred the Brhatkathā to a period between the third and the fifth century A D This is because the Professor thinks that people would hardly have believed in supernatural power unless a considerable interval had elapsed The inference would certainly be

warranted, if all people were rational and sceptical to an equal degree at all periods of history. All the world over, and in regard to all religions, miracles play an important part at a particular stage of development, and people are not wanting in the enlightened twentieth century who have full faith in occultism and spiritualism. This it is that makes several Indian works seem ridiculously absurd to European scholars. If they could appreciate the influence a belief in transmigration exerts upon the minds of simple people, and how closely interwoven it is in all the varying belief of the people in India, they would see that what strikes them as absurd is quite obviously believable even by contemporaries. That this has, as a matter of course, been the case could be proved, if Tamil literature and literary tradition were called into requisition.

There are several works in Tamil called mahākāvyas. The translation of the Brhatkathā, a śnukāppyam or a minor kāvya called *Udayanan kadar* or *Perungadar* or even simply



*ṭadar*, is believed to be the work which gave the authority for the use of the word *kāvya*. This work is ascribed to the period of the middle Śāṅgam, that is, anterior to the third Śāṅgam, the works of which we have in some number. I have put forward my arguments for referring the third Śāṅgam to the earlier centuries of the Christian era, hence this work ought to be referable to a period coeval with the beginning of the era of Christ. If only this could be established beyond a doubt, the history of *Vikramāditya* and *Kaṇishka*, about which there is yet considerable divergence of scholarly opinion, would become settled to a degree not dreamt of by any yet, because, *Sōmadēva*, the translator of the *Brhatkathā*, says in so many clear words that he makes no change in the matter of the original beyond the mere change of language and the necessary abbreviation. It would be hyper-criticism to dispute the assertion of the author without establishing a clear motive as an essential pre-requisite. This consideration has not always been conceded to him.

There is work to be done, therefore, in the

co-ordination of the study of the two languages, Sanskrit and Tamil, in the interest of both. In the absence of the original, if the Sanskrit translation could be collated and compared with the Tamil, the result would go far towards solving one of the most important problems of ancient Indian History, namely, the origin of the Samvat era which has had to be accounted for in so many fanciful ways by great scholars. There are references in both the *Kathāsāntḥsāgara* and the *Bṛhatkathāmanjari* to a Vikramāditya-Vishamaśila, who got rid of the Ml̥cha trouble, and came to be regarded an incarnation of the divine energy of Vishnu or Śiva, it does not matter which to us. This question is too long for discussion here.

My object is not to settle disputed questions or to formulate a new historical hypothesis. Now that archæological and epigraphical work have made some advance, I appeal for a better, more rational, and systematic study of the literature of the country, with a view to making them yield the results that they are capable of. Inscriptions and archæological

research can after all provide the dry bones only. All else will have to be got from literature. Besides, there is a period to which inscriptions do not lead us. For such periods we have to depend upon literary evidence alone, if this is available, either from Sanskrit or the vernaculars. It is a duty that every one owes to his country to do all in his power to advance the study of this literature. In addition to the discharging of a duty, this study of literature will be a source of pleasure even to busy people. Here individual effort can take us only a small way. But if these efforts were made to flow into one channel, the volume would be the greater and the work turned out the larger.

## CHAPTER I

### SOUTH INDIA A DISTINCT ENTITY IN INDIAN HISTORY

THE term South India as a distinct expression referring to the southernmost portion of our country, India, goes back to the days of the Mahābhārata in its present form, for its authority That distinction it has maintained all through historical times even down to the present The whole of India north of the Vindhya Mountains roughly is what is now known as Hindustan, and was perhaps in olden times included in the expression Uttarāpatha In days when perhaps the geographical knowledge of India south of the Vindhyas was somewhat vague, the term Dakshināpatha seems to have indicated all the country south of the Vindhyas But by the time of the compilation of the Mahābhārata in its present form, Dakshināpatha seems to be limited to what we now understand by the term Dekhan

Sahadeva in his southern expedition before the celebration of the Rājasūya (a sacrifice celebrated in token of paramount power) by his eldest brother, conquered the Pulindas, marched southwards from them into the Pāndya country. After fighting a successful battle against the Pāndyas, he moved northwards towards the Dakṣhināpātha.<sup>1</sup> The first

<sup>1</sup> Mahābhārata Kumbh. Ed.

ताम्रानाटविकान् सर्वानजयत् पाण्डुनन्दनः ।

वाताधिप च नृपतिं वशे चक्रेमहाबलः ॥ १६ ॥

पुलिंदाश्च रणे जित्वा ययौ दक्षिणतः पुरः ।

युयुधे पाण्ड्यराजेन दिवसः नकुलानुजः ॥ १७ ॥

तं जित्वा स महाबाहुः प्रययौ दक्षिणापथम् ।

गुहामासादयामास किष्किन्धा लोकविश्रुताम् ॥ १८ ॥

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गच्छ पाण्डवशार्दूल रत्नान्यादाय सर्वशः ।

अविघ्नमस्तु कार्याय धर्मराजाय धीमते ॥ २२ ॥

ततो रत्नान्युपादाय पुरीं माहिष्मतीं ययौ ।

तत्र नीलेन राज्ञा स चक्रे युद्धं नरर्षभः ॥ २३ ॥

(Mahābhārata II 32 Sl 16 23) (See also Sl 70 76)

state that he went to on this frontier was Kishkinda, (the modern Hampi) The next state that he came to was Mābīshmatī (Māndhātā on the Naimada river)

Similarly in the Rāmāyana, <sup>2</sup> Sugriva

- २ सहस्र शिरस विन्ध्य नानाद्रुमलतायुतम् ।  
 नर्मदा च नदीं दुर्गां महोरगनिषेविताम् ॥ ८ ॥  
 ततो गोदावरीं रम्या कृष्णवेणी महानदीम् ।  
 वरदा च महाभागा महोरगनिषेविताम् ॥ ९ ॥  
 मेखलामुत्कला चैव दशार्णनगराण्यपि ।  
 अश्ववन्तीमवन्तीं च सर्वमेवानुपश्यत ॥ १० ॥  
 विदर्भानृषिकाश्चैव रम्यान्माहिषकानपि ।

Rishikān in the text is an obvious error,  
 for Rishikān

- तथा वगान्कलिङ्गाश्च कौशिकाश्च समन्तत ॥ ११ ॥  
 अन्वीक्ष्य दण्डकारण्य सपर्वतनदीगुहम् ।  
 नदीं गोदावरी चैव सर्वमेवानुपश्यत ।  
 तथैवान्ध्राश्च पुण्ड्राश्च चोलान्पाण्ड्यान्सकेरलान् ॥ १२ ॥

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- ततस्तामापगा दिव्या प्रसन्नसलिल शिवाम् ।  
 तत्र द्रक्ष्यथ कावेरी विहितामप्सरोगणै ॥ १५ ॥  
 तस्यासीना नगस्याग्रे मलयस्य महौजसम् ।  
 द्रक्ष्यथादित्यसङ्कागमगस्त्यमृषिसत्तमम् ॥ १६ ॥

directing his search party to the south, gave them the following description of that region, beginning from the centre, the river Śarāvati in the Madyadēśa which flows in a circle and loses itself in the sand. He divides this region obviously into three portions —the region north of the Dandakāranya and in the immediate neighbourhood of the Vindhya, then the region along the East Coast up to the river Krishna, and then the region south of the Krishna. In the second region on the south of the Vindhya figured Vidarbha, Rishika,

ततस्तेनाम्यनुज्ञाताः प्रसन्नेन महात्मना ।

ताम्रपर्णी ग्राह्युषा तरिष्यथ महानदीम् ॥ १७ ॥

सा चन्दनवनैर्दिव्यैः प्रच्छन्ना द्वीपशालिनी ।

कान्तेव युवति कान्त समुद्रमवगाहते ॥ १८ ॥

ततो हेममय दिव्य मुक्तामणिविभूषितम् ।

युक्त कवाट पाण्ड्याना गता द्रक्ष्यथ वानराः ॥ १९ ॥

ततः समुद्रमासाद्य सप्रधार्यार्थनिश्चयम् ।

अगस्त्येनान्तरे तत्र सागरे विनिवेशितः ॥ २० ॥

चित्रनानानग श्रीमान्महेन्द्रः पर्वतोत्तमः ।

जातरूपमयः श्रीमानवगाढो महार्णवम् ॥ २१ ॥

and Māhishaka on the one side, Vanga, Kalinga and Kauśika on the other. Then he puts in the Dandakāranyam in which is included the river Godaverī. Then come in the country of the Andhras, the Pundras, the Cholas, the Pāṇḍyas, the Cheras. Then is given a description of the Kauvery passing on to the hill Malaya, the residence of sage Agastya. Then is described the Tāmravanī river, which they are advised to cross. Then is described the famous place Pāṇḍya Kavātam, generally identified with Kavātapuram or Kapātapuram in Tamil. Then is described the hill Mahēndra across the sea in an island. The older Puranas such as the Matsya,<sup>3</sup> Vāyu,<sup>4</sup> and even Mārkandēya are not perhaps so clear in respect of the distinction between the two parts of the region south of the Vindhya, but they give the main divisions practically along the same lines.

In respect of these works, however, it would be impossible to make anything like a chrono-

<sup>3</sup> Ch. 104 Anandāśrama Edn.

<sup>4</sup> XLV sl. 70 onwards to the end the same edition as the above.



logical inference, though it may now be taken as agreed that both the works, the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyana may have to be referred to the fifth century B C It still is a matter of great doubt as to what exactly is the age of any particular part of the work. In this respect, the Rāmāyana, stands somewhat on a better footing than the Mahābhārata, and a statement made in respect of any book or chapter of these works can be challenged in respect of any chronological datum Hence while the occurrence of the names of the divisions stated above is a matter of some importance, the references do not enable us exactly to fix the period to which the division would have reference We may state roughly, however, that these were probably divisions definitely formed and familiarly recognised in the fourth century before Christ

Another class of literary sources which can be exploited for the purpose is the Buddhist Jātakas and Buddhist literature generally The countries in India which figure among them have reference to about sixteen kingdoms and a few tribal republics Arranging

them on the map, the southernmost portion reached is perhaps Paitān on the Godavery in the western extremity, Aśmaka<sup>5</sup> being the only southern kingdom referred to there at all. The earliest available Buddhist literature therefore does not take us very much beyond the Vindhya mountains, and that seems reflected in one benedictory verse, which occurs at the end of several of the dramas of Bhāsa. The verse merely refers to a wish 'may our Rājasimha bring the whole of the earth from sea to sea, and from the Vindhyas to the Himalayas under one umbrella, and rule it with success'.

## 66 BEGINNINGS OF S. INDIAN HISTORY

Avanti, Kosala, Karūśa and Kalinga <sup>7</sup> None of these takes us south of the Vindhya. All these are in fact states "on the back of the Vindhya," according to the Purāṇas. The Vartika on Pāṇini of Kātyāyana who, according to Bhandarkar, followed Pāṇini more than two centuries after, shows considerable acquaintance with the south. Kātyāyana notes the omission by Pāṇini of the name Pāṇḍya and explains it as "one sprung from an individual of the tribe of the Pāṇḍus or the king of their country should be called a Pāṇḍya." Another of Pāṇini's rules is extended by Kātyāyana to apply to the Cholas and others. Coming down to Patanjali, we find a very much more intimate acquaintance in him of the geography of the south. Of the southern places, he mentions Māhishmatī, Vīdarbha, both of them in the Dekhan and immediately south of the Vindhya, Kāñchipuṭam and Kērala which take us very near to the extreme south. There is besides the general rule that he laid down that a word like Sarasī is used to denote large lakes in the south, hence it is possible

<sup>7</sup> Bombay Gaz Vol I, Part 2, p 138—39

for us to infer that in Patanjali's time about 150 B. C the whole of South India was known to the northerners. In the time of Kātyāyana about 350 B C, South India was fairly well-known while in the days of Pāṇini, according to Sir R G Bhandarkar, about the seventh century B C South India was practically unknown

Coming down to more definitely historical works, the following extract from Megasthenes shows at any rate that some knowledge of the Pāndya country had reached him. He says, from hearsay information obviously, that Herakles beget a daughter in India whom he called Pandara. To her he assigned that portion of India which lies to the southward and extends to the sea while he distributed the people subject to her rule in 365 villages, giving orders that one village each day should bring to the treasury the royal tribute, so that the queen might always have assistance of those men whose turn it was to pay the tribute, in coercing those who for the time being were defaulters in their payment. He was further informed that this

## 68. BEGINNINGS OF S INDIAN HISTORY

female sovereign had an army of 500 elephants, 4,000 cavalry and 130,000 infantry, and possessed great treasure in the fishery for pearls, which according to Arrian were greatly sought by both the Greeks and the Romans

The Arthaśāstra of Chanakya, referable to the same time as Magasthenes, has two references known to me to the South Speaking of pearls and their quality, Chanakya refers to Tāmravarṇika "that which is produced in the Tāmravarṇi", Pāṇḍya Kavātaka<sup>8</sup>, that which is obtained in Pāṇḍya Kavāta (p 86 of Mr. Shama Sastry's Trans)

Further in the same chapter, but speaking this time of cotton fabrics, the Arthaśāstra has

<sup>8</sup> This Pāṇḍya Kavāta, 'a door-way of the Pāṇḍyas,' is a fine commentary on the Kavātam Pāṇḍyānām of the Rāmāyana The commentator on the Arthaśāstra explains it as a mountain known as Malayakōti in the Pāṇḍya country It is rather of doubtful propriety that a place where pearls are found should be referred to as a mountain It seems much more likely that the expression Pāṇḍya Kavāta means, the door-way of entry into the Pāṇḍya country from the sea and the Malayakōti of the commentator therefore, would then be the promontory where the Western Ghats dips into the sea

reference to the fabrics of Madhura, which the commentator explains rightly as southern Madura, and it may be noted also that among other places remarkable for cotton fabrics figures Kalinga, the Tamil name for cloth generally being Kalingam (p 94, *Ibid*)

Next in order of time, the edicts of Asoka do specifically mention the southern kingdoms, and place them as beyond the imperial pale of the Mauryan Empire Three of his rock edicts mention these, and they are edicts II, V, and XIII.

II 'Everywhere in the empire of King Priyadarśin, beloved of the gods, as well as among those nations and princes that are *his neighbours, such as the Choḍas, the Pamḍiyas, the Satīyaputra, the Keralaputa, Tambapanna, the Yona king, called Amtriyoka* as well as among those who are the *vassal-kings of that Amtriyoka*, everywhere king Priyadarśin, beloved of the gods, has founded two (2) kinds of hospitals, both hospitals, for men and hospitals for animals Everywhere where herbs wholesome for men and wholesome for animals are not found, they have been imported and sown by the king's order And wells have been dug by his order for the enjoyment of men and beasts '

V 'Now a long period has passed, and the officials called the Overseers of the Sacred Law have formerly

## 70 BEGINNINGS OF S INDIAN HISTORY

not existed. Now, when I had been anointed thirteen years, I appointed Overseers of the Sacred Law. They are busy among all sects with watching over the sacred law, with the growth of the law, and with the welfare and happiness of my loyal subjects, as also among the *Yonas, Kambojas, Gamdharas, Rishikas, Pisinikas* and *all other nations which are my neighbours* '.

XIII 'But this conquest the beloved of the gods holds the chiefest, *viz*, the conquest through the Sacred Law. And that conquest had been made by the Beloved of the gods both here *in his empire*, and over all *his neighbours*, even as far as six hundred yojanas, where the king of the *Yonas*, called *Amtiyoka* dwells, and beyond this *Amtiyoka*, where the *four* (4) *Kings* dwell, *viz*, he called *Turaniya*, he called *Amtikini*, he called *Maha*, and he called *Aukasudara*\*, further in the south, where the *Okodas* and *Pandās* dwell as far as *Tambapanni*, likewise where the king dwells, among the *Viśās, Vajris*, the *Āmdhras*, and *Palidas* everywhere they follow the teaching of the Beloved of the gods with respect to the Sacred Law. Even those to whom the messengers of the Beloved of the gods do not go, follow the Sacred Law, as soon as they have heard of the orders of the

\*(1) Antiochus, Theos, of Asia, 261—246 B C.

(2) Ptolemy II Philadelphus, 285—247 B C.

(3) Antigonus Gonatas, 278—239 B.C

(4) Magas of Cyrene, d 258 B C

(5) Alexander of Epirus, 272—? 258 B C

Beloved of the gods, issued in accordance with the Sacred Law, and his teaching of the Sacred Law, and they will follow it in future ' (Bubler in *Epigraphia Indica* II)

These edicts, it will be seen, refer to a number of rulers and by implication to the regions over which they ruled. They seem also to be classified into two groups: those that are his neighbours and perhaps in a position of subordination to him, and those with whom his relations were on terms of independence and equality. Among the former have to be included the Yonas, Kambojas, the Gandharas, all of them along the north-western frontier. The Yonas, must have been the Greek state of Bactria and the subordinate chieftaincies thrown out from there perhaps in the Kabul Valley and elsewhere, where they might have spread out. The Kambhojas are usually located in the north-western corner of Kashmir extending downwards. The Gandharas were the people in the region westward of the Punjab, including the two capitals Taxila and Pushkalāvati, that is the region between Kabul and India along the Kaibar way. The other two regions mentioned are the Rashtrakas



and Pitenikas. The Rishṭikas perhaps were a vast group of people among whom Māhrattas were the principal group, there being other Rashtikas or Rishṭikas besides. There is nothing to connect them with the Ārattas, but the Saurāshṭras or the name Surāshtra for the country may be originally traceable to them. It is a little more doubtful if the same could be said of Gūrjarāshṭra (Gujarat) and Pitenikas,<sup>9</sup> the country round about Paṭṭan on the Godaverī.

We are justified by edict II quoted above, in distinguishing the empire of King Pradyakṣin and his neighbours the independent monarchs, such as the Chola, the Pāṇḍya, the Satiyaputra and Kēralaputra in the south, and Amtiyoka (Amtiyoks) and his vassal-kings in the west. In regard to these southern monarchs the Cholas, the Pāṇḍyas, and the Kērala are plain enough to us. They are respectively the coast country on the east extending per-

<sup>9</sup> The form Paṭṭān from Prathishtāna is considered unsound philologically. Sans. Prithishtāna, becoming Paṭṭāna thro Payitṭāna into Piṭṭāna seems possible as a folk etymology or apabhrāṃśa philology even.

haps from the Pulikat to the Vellar in the Pudukotta State with its capital at Uaiyūr. The Pāndya country next following extending from coast to coast along a line drawn from perhaps the point Kalimeie to Kottayam, with its capital at Madura, and the Kērala country along the western coast, extending northwards of this, and including in it the northern half of Travancore, the State of Cochin and considerable portions of Malabar. The Satiya-putra seems obviously to refer to the region immediately north of this and the name Satiya-putra seems normally to indicate the prevalence of the Matriarchate or Aliyasantānam Law. These are put on a level with the Greek King Antiochus Theos (God), grandson of Seleucus Nicator (Victorious) the rival and friend of Chandragupta. This edict makes the position clear so far that these states were beyond the boundaries of the empire of Asoka.

Coming down to edict V, which relates to the appointment of Overseers of the Sacred Law, Asoka distinguishes between "My loyal subjects and those among the Yonas and other people, and then all other nations his neigh-

bours," which seems to indicate that the Yonas and the other people were in some sense subordinate to him perhaps tributary states under him. The Edict XIII on the contrary makes the division between his empire and all his neighbours, and again puts Amtiyoka and his four neighbours on a footing similar to the Cholas and their neighbours the Pāṇḍyas. He makes the further distinction of those to whom the "Messengers of the Beloved of the Gods" are sent, and those to whom they do not go. The best commentary upon this arrangement of his is in the Mahāvamśa of Ceylon where we find the following

"When the Thera Moggaliputta, the illuminator of the religion of the Conqueror, had brought the (third) council to an end and when, looking into the future, he had beheld the founding of the religion in adjacent countries, (then) in the month Kattika he sent forth theras, one here and one there. The therā Majjhantika he sent to Kashmira and Gandhāra, the therā Mahādēva he sent to Mahishamandala. To Vanavāsa he sent the therā named Rakkhita, and to Aparāntaka

the Yona named Dhammarakkhita; to Mahārāṭṭha (he sent) the therā named Mahādhammarakkhita, but the therā Mahārakkhita he sent into the country of the Yona. He sent the therā Majjhima to the Himalaya country, and to Suvannabhūmi he sent the two theras Śona and Uttara. The great therā Mahinda, the theras Itthiya, Uttiya, Sambala and Bhaddasala his disciples, these five theras he sent forth with the charge. 'Ye shall found in the lovely island of Lanka the lovely religion of the Conqueror'" (Geiger's *Mahāvamsa* p. 82)

The passage refers to the missions for the propagation of the faith sent under the command of Asoka to various localities for the purpose of carrying the teachings of the 'Enlightened One' to those regions. Among the territories mentioned here are Kashmir, and Gāndhāra in neighbourhood. Then the next mission was that sent to Mahishamandala, which in this case may have to be identified with Māhishmati, though the name Mahishamandala is of equal application to the territory which is now Mysore, as will be shown later. The next

## 76 BEGINNINGS OF S INDIAN HISTORY

region is Vanavāsa, which is the Banavasi, 12,000 district in the southern Mahratta country and Mysore. Then comes the region of the northern Konkan coast and that is Aparānta. Then comes Maharāshtra, then comes the country of the Yona, which probably was the region somewhere in the immediate neighbourhood of India, Afghanistan or Beluchistan. Then comes the country called Suvainabhumī, which is usually identified with the gold-producing province of the Malaya Peninsula and Tennassaim (the Chryse of the classical writers), last and most important of all Ceylon, because it is the history of Buddhism in Ceylon that is the subject of the treatise. This enumeration of countries seems to go so far only to confirm our classifications of the territories referred to in the Asoka edicts as (1) those of his empire proper, (2) of the dependencies of the empire and (3) of states in independent diplomatic relations. If the Māhishamandala referred to here stands for the country of the Māhishakas round Māndhātā, on the Nerbada, for which there is very good reason, then Banavasi is the

southernmost limit, and we find India south of the fourteenth degree of latitude out of the pale of imperial rule

This is confirmed in another way though somewhat less directly from the Mahāvamsa itself. Duttagāmaṇi Abhaya on the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of the great Stūpa (Thūpa) had called for an assembly of most of the leading Buddhists from the various Buddhist centres. In response to this invitation there assembled —

	Bhikkhus from		
1 Indagutta	with 80,000	„ Rājagāha (Rāj-griha capital of Maghada)	
2 Dhammasūna	„ 12,000	„ Isipatana (the Deer Park in Benares)	
3 Piyaḍassi	„ 60,000	„ Jētārāma-vihara (Vihara outside of Śrāvastī in Nepal Tharai)	
4 Urubuddharakkhita	„ 80,000	„ Mahāvana (in Vaiśālī)	
5 Urudhammarakkhita	„ 30,000	„ Ghōsitārāma (In Kośambī)	
6 Urusamgharakkhita	„ 40,000	„ Dalakkhinagira-vihara in Ujjeni (Ujjain in Malva)	
7 Mittinna	„ 160,000	„ Aśokārāma in Pupphapura (Pāṭaliputra or Patna)	
8 Uttinna	„ 280,000	„ Kashmir	

## 78 BEGINNINGS OF S INDIAN HISTORY

- 9 Mahādēva                   ,, 460,000 ,, Pallavabhogga (the Fief of the  
Pallavas probably in  
Gujarat, also regions of  
the Indus)
- 10 Yonamahādhammarak-  
khita                   ,, 30,000 ,, Alasanda, the city of the  
Yonas, Alexandria of the  
Yonas which may be one  
of the many Alexandrias,  
Alexandria near Kabul,  
Alexandria near the junc-  
tion of the Jhelum and  
the Indus or Karachi,  
which was itself one of  
the Alexandrias
- 11 Uttara                   ,, 60,000 ,, Road of the V i n d h y a n  
forests
- 12 Chittagupta               , 30,000 ,, Bodhimaṇḍa-vihara (in  
Bodhgaya)
- 13 Chandagupta             ,, 80,000 ,, Vanavāsa country (Banavasi  
in the Dharwar dist)
- 14 Suriyagutta             ,, 96,000 ,, Great Kēlasa-vihara probab-  
ly Kailasa-vihara which  
may be from the region of  
Ellora in the present  
Nizam's dominions, or  
Amarāvati, Guntur.

Here again it will be noticed that the famous Buddhist centres do not come beyond Vana-vāsa, and this has reference to the period A B. 382 to 406, or 101 to 77 B C on the basis of B C. 483 for Buddha Nirvana

This position is confirmed by what we can derive from early Tamil literature but before passing on to that, we may say a word about this Ceylon chronicle. This is a chronicle of the history of Buddhism maintained in one of the many monasteries of the Buddhists, and was put together in its present form in the sixth century A D by the Sthavira monk, Mahānāman. That was done obviously in commentary upon the earlier, but somewhat less classical *Dipavamsā* which was composed in the fourth century A. D. as it stops short in its account with the reign of Mahāsēna, who came to the throne sometime about A D 306. Even this *Dipavamsā* is believed to have derived its material from various *Attakathas* (Sans. *Arthakathā*, stories in exposition of the meaning of various portions of the Buddhist gospel). Thus while it is possible that the reference has contemporaneous autho-



## 80 BEGINNINGS OF S INDIAN HISTORY

rity, we could have little doubt that it belongs at any rate to the fourth century A D , if not earlier This fourth century authority goes only to confirm what is indicated in the edicts and what perhaps is unconsciously expounded in early Tamil literature We shall pass on to this last now

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## CHAPTER II

### MAURYAN INVASION OF SOUTH INDIA

TILL recently it was held doubtful that the references to the Chola, Pāndya and Kērala in Asoka's edicts, had anything more in them than a mere boast on the part of the Buddhist Emperor. The discovery of his edicts at Siddhāpura, Brāhmagiri and Jatinga Rāmesvara hill in Mysore in 1892 did put the edicts upon a somewhat better footing in respect of their veracity. The discovery two years ago of a copy of Asoka's edicts in Maski, in the Nizam's dominions, gave new and powerful support to the contention of those, that maintained that Asoka's territory actually extended to the frontiers of Mysore. This last discovery is of the highest historical value, as the edicts are almost a replica of those at Sāhasram and therefore of a time somewhere about his thirteenth year.<sup>1</sup> The Mysore edicts seem later. If then, as the

<sup>1</sup> Hyderabad Archæological Series No. 1 p. 3.

Maski edicts shew, there was a southern province of Asoka, and if the Suvarṇnagiri, the capital of the Āryaputta and the Mahāmātras, has to be looked for round Maski itself or in the territory of the Ancient Kuntala,<sup>2</sup> when was South India conquered and how far did the conquest go actually? Light is shed upon this darkness from an unexpected source, and that is, classical Tamil Literature

Before proceeding to let this light in, it is necessary to know what exactly is the present position of historians in regard to this matter Mr Vincent A Smith in his *Early History of India* (Third Edition), which is later than his monograph on Asoka, has on page 163 “The Tamil States extending to the extremity of the Peninsula, and known as the Chola and Pāṇḍya kingdoms, certainly were independent as were the Kērlaputra and Satiyaputra states on the south-western, or Malabar Coast The southern frontier of the empire may be described approximately as a line drawn from the mouth of the Pennar River, near Nellore on

<sup>2</sup> Para 1 *Ibid*

the Eastern coast through Cuddappah and to the south of Chitaldroog (North lat 14 13', E. Long 76 24) to the river Kalyānapuri on the west coast (about N Lat. 14), which forms the northern boundary of the Tuluva country, probably representing the old kingdom of Satiyaputra." In regard to this southern boundary the limits marked out in the extract are substantially correct on the information furnished by epigraphy. This correctness is confirmed by what we are able to glean from Tamil literary sources except in regard to the eastern limit of this line. The Tamils marked out the limit of Tamil land at Pulikat, which is the Anglo-Indian corruption of Palavērkkādu (old forest of Vēl trees).<sup>3</sup> This is referred to in Ancient Tamil literature as Vērkkādu, without the adjective for 'old' standing before the name. This

3 குலலைக கண்ணி வடுகா முனையது

வலவேழ் காட்டி னன் னுடமெபா

மொழி பெயாதேளத்த நாயினும

வழிவிடல முழந்தி நினவருடை நாட்டே

## 84 BEGINNINGS OF S INDIAN HISTORY

is usually described as Vaḍukarmunai, the 'end of the Northerners' territory. When this limit is passed the language also changes (Moliṭpeyartēṉ, <sup>4</sup> the country where the spoken language changes to another). The limit on the other side is given as the Tulu land or Konkānam <sup>5</sup>, the territory of the chief Nannan in the first century of the Christian era, which

4 பணிபுடு சோலை வேங்கடத தும்பா  
மொழி பெயாதே எத்தரெனப

Māmulanār in Abam. 210/11.

வேள்றியோடு

விலலவைததுணனும வல்லாண வாழககை  
தமிழ்கெழு மூவா காகரும  
மொழி பெயாதே எத்தபனமலை யிறநதே

Māmalanār in *Ibid* 31.

5 Abam 15 & Narṇinaṭ 391

மெயமமலி பெருமபூட் செமமற கோசர்  
கொமமையம பசுங்காயக குடுமி வினோநத  
பாகலா கைப பறைக கட்பீலித  
தோகை காவிற்றுளு நாட்டனன

Abam 15 Māmulanār

பொன்படு கோண்கான நன்ன னனனாட  
டேழிற் தன்றம் பெறினும பொருளவயின  
யாரோ பிரிகிற பவரே,

Narṇinaṭ 391 Pālaipāḍiya Perungaḍungō.

was broken into by a new people Kōśar, as a result of a war in which Nannan obviously suffered defeat, and lost his state elephant <sup>6</sup> Thus then, Tamil literature ascribable to about the first century of the Christian era supports the statement that this line constituted the southern boundary of the Mauryas except for a difference of half a degree in the eastern end

The Dekhan, or Peninsular India, down to approximately the latitude of Nellore, must therefore apparently have been subjugated by either Chandragupta or Bindusāra, because it was inherited from the latter by Asoka, whose only recorded war was the conquest of Kalinga; and it is more probable that the conquest of the south was the work of Bindusāra than it was effected by his busy father' Mr Vincent A Smith also notes that the Tibetan historian Tāiānātha (Scheifner p 89) attributes to Bindusāra and Chanakya the conquest of the country between the eastern and western seas.

The fact of the conquest of the south has remained so far an inference and no more. In regard to the question which of the first three Mauryas did actually make the conquest there is no further direct information than the inference we are left to make from the known extent of Asoka's Empire and the statement of Tārānātha regarding Bindusāra's conquest, unless the last two lines quoted by Dr Fleet from the *Mahāvamśa* be held to imply Asoka's conquest of the south.

Among the poets who constituted, according to tradition, the famous third Academy at Mādura we find the name Māmulanār, a Brahman scholar whose name, as an author, is held in very high esteem in the Tamīl world.

१ पत्वा चतुर्हि वत्सेहि येकरञ्ज महायशो ।  
पुरे पाटलिपुत्रसिन् अत्ताणं अभिषेध्ववि ॥

(J B A S 1909 p 29)

'Having attained the sole sovereignty in four years' of the first line need not have exclusive reference to the slaughter of his brothers if such could be held to be a historical fact. As a matter of fact it is very doubtful if the massacre of the brothers is at all a fact as rock edict V (Vincent A Smith's *Asoka*, p 162, note 4) refers to his brothers and sisters.

even now His works were of the character of fugitive poems which are found scattered in various collections, all of them generally regarded as having had the 'Śaṅgam (Academy) imprimatur. Without basing his antiquity upon the fact, that his works are found included in these collections, there is enough internal evidence to show that he was an elder contemporary perhaps of Paranaṁ, and an exact contemporary of the Chola ruler Karikāla and of Nannan, 'the Woman killer' He is regarded as a separate person from the Tirumūlar of the 'Śaiva School' This author has a number of references to the invasion of the south by the Mauryas, who, according to him, must have advanced, at least as far south as Madura and Podiyil Hill This author, according to Nachchinārkkiniyar, the commentator, was a Brahman belonging to the family of the Sage Agastya, and belonged to the part of the country hallowed by his presence, that is the country round the Podiyil Hill in the Western Ghats in the South-West of Madura and the neighbouring parts of the Tinnevely District of the Madras Presidency



## 88 BEGINNINGS OF S. INDIAN HISTORY

The first reference in this author to call for notice is in Aham 15<sup>8</sup> where the author refers to the entry of a warlike tribe called *Kośar* into the Tulu Naḍu of Nannan-Aham 251 of the same author refers again to these *Kośar* and states that these people administered a crushing defeat upon their enemies near Podiyil Hill<sup>9</sup> On this occasion, says the poet, Mohur not having submitted, the newly-installed 'Mauryas came up at the head of a great army,' the rolling

<sup>8</sup> *Vide* note 3

<sup>9</sup> நாமபடா கூறுமருநதுயா கேடபி °

னந்தன் வெறுக்கை யெய்தினு மறறவட

டவகலா வாழிதோழி வெல கொடித

துனை காலனனபுனை தேர்கீ கோசர்

தொனமுதாலத் தருமபினைப பொதியீ

வினனிசை முரசுககடிப பிடித்திரவகத

தேய்முனை சிதைந்த ஞான்றை மோகூர்ப்

பணியாமையிற பகைதலைவரத

மாகெழுதானை வம்ப மோரியர்

புனைதோ நெய்யுருளிய குறைதத

விவகரு வெள்ளருவி யறைவாயுமபா

Aham 251. Māmūlanār

(Mahamahopadhyaya Paudit Swaminatha Iyer's text obligingly copied by him)

cars of which had to come up cutting their way along hill slopes. The same poem has a reference to the enormous wealth of the Nandas, to which again there is another reference in poem 265<sup>10</sup> of the same collection. In this passage is given the additional information, which is reminiscent of the revolution in Pataliputra, that 'the wealth of the Nandas, which having accumulated first in Pātali, hid itself in the floods of the Ganges.' Hence the expression 'Vamba Moriyai' the *Maurya novae hominiae* is justified in respect of this author, and his contemporaries. Poem

10 புகையிற பொங்கி வியலவிசமபுநதது  
பனியுழு கொடிசுபெபத தோன்று  
மிமையச சிமையச செவவரை மாணுககொலலோ  
பலபுகழ நிறைந்த வெலபோரா நந்தா  
சோமிகு பாடலிற குழீஇககங்கை  
நீறமுதற கரந்த நிதியுகொலலோ

Māimālanār Aham 264

(Madras Govt. Mus. Library Copy)

Compare with this, the same author's Aham 126/127

நன்னகா மாந்தை முற்றநீ தொனனா  
பணிதிரை கொணாந்தபாடுசோ நனகலம  
பொன செலபாவை வயீர மொடாமப  
லொன்று வாவநிறையகருவை இயன்றவ  
னிலநீதினத் துறந்த நிதியந்தனை

281<sup>11</sup> of our author, in the same work, contains another reference to the same incidents with one or two additional details. These last are (1) that the Mauryas came south pushing the Vadukar in front (Northerners literally, but in later times the Telugu and Kanarese peoples), (2) that they cut their way across a high hill which barred their way. The expression used actually in regard to the latter detail even suggests a tunnel being cut through.

Leaving aside the texts for the present the points calling for consideration in these references of Māmulanār to the Mauryas are (1) The fact of the invasion of the South by the Mauryas, the southernmost point reached being Podiyil Hill in the S W corner of

- 11 கனேசுர லிசைசுகும விரைசெலற கடுகனை  
முரணமிசு வடுகர் முன்னுற மோரியர்  
தெனறிசை மாதிர முன்னியவரவிறகு  
விண்ணுற வோங்கிய பனியிருங்குன்றத  
தொண்கதிராத திகிரியுருளிய குறைத்த  
வரை யிறந்தவரோ சென்றனா. (றை)

*Vide* last two lines of note 9

Aham, 281

(Maham Swaminathaiyar's text)

Madura (2) The advance party of the invasion was composed of a warlike people called Kośar in one case and Vadukar in another. (3) The point of time to which these invasions are referable

In regard to point 1, the texts of this author are quite clear and unmistakeable. He is supported in regard to this statement by two others. One of them is called Parānar according to one manuscript, but the manuscript in the Madras Government Oriental Manuscripts Library of Aham 69<sup>12</sup> shews the author's name as Param Korranār. The language of the reference is equally clear, and quite similar in regard to the cutting of the way through a hill for the car to pass. Poem 175<sup>13</sup> of Puram

12 விண்பொரு நெரு (அ) நெருடையிறோ மோரியா  
பொன புனைதிரி திரிதீத (க) குறைதத  
வரையிற தகனறனராய்நு மெனையதூஉ  
நீஉ (ட) லாவாழி தோழி

Aham 69 Paramkorranār

13 விண்பொரு நெருநெருடையிறோ மோரியா\*  
திணகதிரை திரிதிரிதிரை குறைதத  
வுலகவிடை கழியறைவாய் நிலைய  
மலாவாய மண்டிலத்தனை

Puram 175 Kallil Āttirayanār

\* Another reading —மோரியர்

by Kallil Āttiraiyanār, celebrating the patron Ādan Ungan has an equally clear reference to the army of the Mauryas cutting their way through rock to let the road go through the middle of the world. The commentator obviously was not able to understand the reference, and adopted in consequence a reading Ōriyar for Mōriyar, making the passage seem legendary. The far-fetched character of his comment is unmistakeable evidence of misreading. The manner of reference in all passages under consideration, makes it clear that this 'cutting' (whether a tunnel or no) was at a great distance from the Tamil country. The reference in the majority of the passages is to a lover who had gone away from his sweetheart, and this cutting is brought in much in the manner of Shakespeare's 'her husband is to Aleppo gone'. All the references are in the past tense and give evidence of the event having been of recent historical occurrence.

In respect of the Kośal and the Vaḍukar we have other confirmatory evidence. One

passage<sup>14</sup> in Paranar, a contemporary poet with Māmūlanār, states that this warlike tribe entered Nannan's territory after a battle in which Nannan lost his state elephant. This Nannan's territory is, according to certain poems, the Tulu-country (*Vide* Aham 15) and according to others (Narīnai 391), Konkānam (Tamil for Konkānam, or Anglo-Indian, Konkān). That this territory actually took in parts of Konkān and Canara or Tulu is borne out by the fact that one of his famous hills Ēlilmalai<sup>15</sup> exists to-day as Saptasāla or Ēlilmalai about 16 miles north of Cannanore. The Kōśai then entered Nannan's territory through Konkān, and had a south-east trend in their movement through Kongu, (Aham 195 and Śīlappadhikāram, Kongilan-gośar) till they reached the Podiyil Hill much farther south. These Tamil works refer to these Kōśai in association with the Mauryas, almost as constituting the advanced guard of

<sup>14</sup> Kurumtogaī 73 See note 4

<sup>15</sup> Narīnai 391 See Note 3 Mont D' of the medieval writers Yule's Marco Polo. Bk. I note 1

their army of invasion The Rāmāyaṇa contains a reference to a people, called Kōśakāra, the equivalent of the Tamil Kośar, in the following passage —

ब्रह्ममालान् विदेहाश्च माळ्वान् काशि कोसलाम् ।

मगधाश्च महाग्रामान् पुण्ड्रान् वज्रस्तथैवच ॥

पत्तणं कोशकाराणा भूमिश्च रजताकरान् ।

(IV 40 121 &c. Kumbakonam Edn.)

The city of the Kōśakāra finds mention among the states towards the east to which Sugriva directed one section of his great search party The commentary explains the centre of reference to have been the 'Śarāvati,' a river in Rajaputana which flows in a circle and loses itself in the sands If it is permissible to locate this on the basis of the data available to us in this, the habitat of the Kōśakāra will correspond to Assam The term Kōśakāra is explained by the commentary called Tilaka, as a people engaged in the work of rearing silk-worms and manufacturing silk If this interpretation is correct, then there must have been in East Bengal a warlike people whose usual peaceful avocation

was silk manufacture and who might have formed part of the Mauryan army. It seems to be these people who had laid hold of the hill fort Pāli of Nannam from which these were dislodged by the Chola king, Neydalan-kānal Ilanjēṭchenni, identical in all probability with the father of Karikāla, the great Chola. In this connection these people are referred to as Vada Vaḍukar' (the Northern Northerners) in Puram 378,<sup>16</sup> and Vamba Vaḍukar (the new Northerners) in Aham 375.<sup>17</sup> It is again the same general movement of the northerners that is reflected

16 தென்பாதவா மிடல சாய

வடவடுகர் வானோட்டிய

ஊற்றற கன்னின சோழன கோயில

Puram 378 Ūnpodī Paṣuṅṅudayār in honour of Ilanjēṭchenni destroyer of Pāli or Śruppāli,

17

சோழா பெருமகன

வினககுபுகழ் தீறுதவளம பெருஞ்சென்னி

குடிக கடனாகவினகுற வினைமுடிமா

செம்புறழ் புரிசைப பாழ் நூறி

வம்பவடுகர் பைந்தலைச வட்டி

Aham 375/74 by Idayan Śendan Korānār



in Narrinai 170,<sup>18</sup> where the Malayamān chief of Mullūr is said to have sallied out and defeated single-handed the 'Aryas' that had laid seige to the fort. We have already referred to Pulikat as the limit of Aryan land in Kuruntogai II,<sup>19</sup> and to the change of language when one passed either this or the hill Venkata (Tirupati)<sup>20</sup>. These taken together seem to warrant the inference that there was a series of Aryan invasions under the Mauryas and their successors the Andhras, as distinct from Aryan settlements previous to these, and that the Tamil kings and chiefs stemmed the tide of invasion successfully so far as to rank among the allies of the great Mauryan Emperor Asoka on terms of equality, as in fact they are referred to have been in the Asoka edicts.' In this connection it deserves to be noted that the same poet

18 எழுமினெழுமினென கொழுநற்காகக  
மாரியர் துவன்றிய பேரிசை முள்ளூர்ப்  
பலருடன கழித்த வொளவான மலையன  
தொருவேற கோடியாகரு

Narrinai 170, author not known.

19 See note (1)

20 Aham 15 & Narrinai 391. See note 3

Māmūlanār refers, in Aham 115, <sup>21</sup> to a chief-tain Erumai of Kudanādu (parts of Mysore and Coorg) The chief's name seems to have stuck on to the country so far as to make it referable in Tamil literature as the territory of Erumaiyūnān Hence Asoka's Mahishamandala which is a good translation of Erumainādu might still refer to this frontier state, notwithstanding Dr Fleet's satisfactory identification of Māhishmatī with Māndhātā on the Naimada Māhishmatī was a city—the city of Kārtavīrya-Arjuna—but there is good authority for equating the name with that of the people Mahishakas and giving it the meaning that is usually given The connection with modern Mysore town or state, is not quite proved though it is possible to understand that the whole country or any part thereof might have been known Mahishamandala This is only by the way now

What is relevant to the question is that the references to the Vadukai and Aryai in

<sup>21</sup> துணைநெருமை குடநாட்டினன்

Aham 15/14 Māmūlanār.

this latter batch are to either contemporaneous or to almost contemporaneous events. The defeat of the Aryar by the Malayamān on the one side, and the destruction of Pālī and the crushing of the Vamba Vadukar (newly established northerners) there by Ilanjētchenni cannot refer to the same early period as the Maurya invasions of Māmūlar. These have an organic connection with the defeat of the Aryas by Imayavaramban Perumśēral Ādan,<sup>22</sup> Pāndyan Āryappadaḥ Kadanda Nedum Śeliyan<sup>23</sup>

22 ஆரியா துவன்றிய பேரிசை யிமயம

தென்னங்குமரி யொடாவிடை

மனமீக கூறுநா

அமைவரலருவி யிமையிம் லின்பொறித்

திமிழ் கடலவேலித தமிழகம் விளங்கத

தனகோனிந் இததகைசால சிறப்பொடு

பேரிசைமரபினூரியா வணகதி

Padirrupattu I (i) 23—25 & II. பதிகம்

23 வடவாயிர்ப்படை கடந்து

தென்றமிழ் நாடொருங்கு காண்ப

புறைநீர கற்பிற நேவிதன்னுட

னரசுகடடி விறறுஞ்சிய பாண்டிய

னெடுஞ்செழியன்

Śilappadikūram XXIII, 11. 14-15.

and Karikala<sup>24</sup> who all lay claim to victory over the Ariyas, and to having erected their respective emblems the bow, the fish and the tiger 'on the face of the Himalayas'<sup>25</sup> All these seem to refer to action taken by the 'Tamils in concert, when the Central power in the North began to weaken, to beat back the Northerners from the South, there being perhaps in it also the Southern Hindu hostility to the Northern Buddhism. Taken together the references seem to warrant the inferences (1) that the Mauryas carried their invasions to the farthest south of India, (2) that they were in hostile occupation of forts in the northern borders of the Tamil land extending

24 இமைய வநுநையுந சிமையப் பிடர் த்தலைக்  
கேடுவாயே ஸ்திக் கொண்கையிற பெயாவோறஞ்  
மாதாவேலி வத்திரந் தாளுடக  
கோணிறை கொடுத்த கொற்றப் பாதமும்  
மகந் தாளுடகி வாள்வாய வேந்தன்  
பகைப்புறத்தக கொடுத்த படடி மண்டபமும்  
வெந்நீர் வேந்த லுவந்தன்ன கொடுத்த  
சிவந்தோரு மரபிறனே சண்டவாயிறும்

Ibid. V L 98 & Commentary thereon

25 கயலெழுதிய விமய கெற்றியி  
னயலெழுதிய புலியும் வில்லும்

Opus, cit XVII 11 1 & 2.

from Pulikat in the east to almost Goa in the west, and (3) that these Aryans were beaten back when the Mauryas and their successors at headquarters become too feeble or too much occupied to be able to retain their hold on the distant south

Coming down to point 3 regarding the time of these invasions our sources do not give us any direct lead. The references to the Maurya invasions are all of them in the past and do not warrant inferences of contemporaneity, though the character of these references is unmistakeably historical. We are almost able to see the line of advance through Tulu into Kongu. Therefrom there is a double line, one south-eastwards through Tirukkovi-lu, to the Chola country perhaps as a further objective, though we have no evidence of its having gone so far, and the other through the famous historical route through the Palnis (Tam Podini) into the Pāndya country up to the Podiyil Hill. These invasions must have taken place in the heyday of the Mauryan power after Chandragupta had entered into the definitive treaty with Seleucus I of Asia

(Nicatol) It may be that he himself effected the conquest, or his son<sup>26</sup> as his father's viceroy, at Vidiśa. The invasion must have come through the later Burhanpur Road, the ancient Dakshināpatha, leading from Avanti through Vidarbha into the Dekhan, and must have gone along the Western Ghats into the Tamil country avoiding Dandāraṇyam as the Tamils called it (Sans. Dandakāraṇyam). The inference is supported by (1) the Tamils regarding the country north of Pulikat as having been foreign in language, (2) their regarding the locality as a border land in which cattle forays could be committed with impunity, (3) their regarding Dandāraṇyam as having been includ-

<sup>26</sup> The surname Amitrachates (Gr. for Amitraghāta) for Bindusāra indicates that he was a great conqueror, as the Greeks knew him by this surname rather than by his name. The point of Dr. Fleet's objection in regard to the word Amitraghāta not being a name is not clear. It could not have been a name. In the Ramāyana Kumbhakarna is described as Amitraghātā (VI. 60-97 Kumbh Edition). We have no precedents for Gangai-konda, Akālavarsha, Āhavamalla &c., nor for Ajātaśatru.

ed in the Aīyan land as in the Padirrupattu<sup>27</sup> and in the Periplus of the Erythræan Sea<sup>28</sup>.

The Maurya invasion and the attempt at occupation of the Tamil country should be referred to the period intervening the treaty between Seleucus and Chandragupta, and the thirteenth year of Asoka. Their dislodgment from the south must be referred to the period

27

ஈனறமகன

றண்டாரணியத்துக் கோட்பட்டவருடையைத்

தொண்டியுடன்து கொடுப்பித்துப் பாரப்பாராகு

*Commentary.*

இதன பதிகத்துத் தண்டாரணிய மெனறது சூரிய நாட  
மில் உளனதோர் நாடு

Padirrupattu, VI பதிகம்

<sup>28</sup> Beyond Barygaza the adjoining coast extends in a straight line from north to south, and so this region is called Dachinabades, for *dachanos* in the language of the natives means "south." The inland country back from the coast toward the east comprises many desert regions and great mountains, and all kinds of wild beasts—leopards, elephants, enormous serpents, hyenas, and baboons of many sorts, and many populous nations, as far as the Ganges

of internal weakness and foreign invasions between the fall of the Sungas and the rise of the Āndhīabhṛtyas of the Purāṇas which period various lines of evidence indicate as being capable of inclusion in the period of Māmūlanāi and others of the third Tamil Academy of Madurai.



## CHAPTER III.

### THE DAWN OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA

#### *I South Indian Commerce*

INDIA the wonderland of the east, as it is even now called, was made known to the west, as it never was before, when the world conqueror, Alexander the Great, forced open her gates on the north-west. Our knowledge of India at all of a definite character may be said to extend no farther than this period, as, according to the most recent authority, his connection with India was not much more than a great raid. It is matter of common knowledge that he had to give up his idea of carrying his conquests right up to the eastern limits of the land, (according to his own notion of the configuration of the earth), owing to a mutiny among his soldiers headed by his cavalry commander Koinos. Before leaving India, however, he divided his conquests on this side of the Indian Caucasus into three viceroyalties as follows.

I Paropanisadae, the country west of the Indus, with Oxyartes, the father of Roxana, for its viceroy

II The Punjab including in it the kingdom of Taxila, and that of Porus, that of the Sophytes together with the territories of the Oxydrachoi and the Malloi, under the Viceroy Philip, son of Machetas, leaving the civil administration in the hands of the native princes

III Sindh including the kingdom of Moussikanos, Oxykanos, Sambus and Maeris of Patalene under Peithon, the son of Agenor, for its viceroy

Philip was murdered in a mutiny, before the death of Alexander, and his place was taken by Eudamos who remained in India till called away in 317 B C to help Eumenes against Antigonus of Asia, the most powerful among the Diadochi. When the Macedonian Empire was partitioned a second time in 321 B C (consequent on the death of Perdikkas, the regent of the first partition,) the Indian province, east of the Indus, was left out of account, as Peithon had to withdraw to the

western bank of the great river About 305 B. C Seleucus Nikator made an attempt to revive the empire of Alexander in this region, but had to relinquish his hold upon the whole of Afghanistan, and enter into a humiliating treaty with Chandragupta, the Maurya emperor of India This personage is believed to have been in the camp of Alexander in the Punjab, and, thrown upon his own resources as the great Macedonian turned away from the banks of the Ravi, he took advantage of the confusion resulting from the departure of Alexander to overthrow the Greek provinces in India, and the ruling Nanda in Magadha, before he set himself up as the first Emperor of India, hitherto known to history In the course of fifteen years he was able to make himself so strong as to fight Seleucus, not only on equal terms but also to extort from him such a valuable cession of territory as Afghanistan up to the Hindu-Kush. For three generations this dynasty held its power undiminished. His grandson Asoka, the great Buddhist Emperor of India, was able to hold his own with the successors of Seleucus, and

maintained with them the diplomatic relations thus begun by his grandfather. It seems to be well attested that both Seleucus Nikator and Ptolemy Philadelphus had sent ambassadors to the courts of Chandragupta and Bindusāra, although scholars are not wanting yet who consider the particular edict of Asoka a mere boast. With the death of Asoka about 230 B. C. the Mauryan empire loses its hold upon the more powerful and distant of its vassals, and the days of the dynasty are numbered.

From this event to the year A D 319 the date of the rise to power of the Imperial Guptas, the history of India is yet quite uncertain, although we are able to gain a few glimpses as to the general features of the history of that period. The Asiatic empire of the Seleucidae was attacked simultaneously by the Romans and the Gauls from the west and north-west, and the Parthians from the east. About the beginning of the second century B. C., Parthia made good her independence under Arsakes Mithridates I,

and Bactria under Eukratides <sup>1</sup> This was but the reflex action of the movements of the nomad tribes in the far-off plains of Mongolia. The great tribe of the Hiung-nu fell with all the hostility of immediate neighbours upon the Yueh-chi, and dislodged them from their then habitat in the plains of Zungaria. These in their turn fell upon the Wu-sung, killed the Wu-sung chieftain in battle, and marched further upon the region then in the occupation of the Se, Sok or Sakas. These last had to make room for them along the right bank of the Oxus and occupy the country protected by the Indian Caucasus. The Yueh-chi were themselves defeated by the son of the late Wu-sung chieftain. When his father fell in battle he found a secure asylum with the Hiung-nu, who now helped him to regain his lost patrimony. It was in the course of these movements that the Śakas and possibly some of the Hiung-nu moved down the Kabul valley into India, and occupied the country on the right bank of the Indus, another

<sup>1</sup> V A Smith, *Early History of India*, p 210 ff

body probably from the region of Seistan occupying right down even to Gujarat. It is one of their out-settlements on the Jumna that the coins and other antiquities of Muttra would seem to warrant.

While all this was taking place across the borders of India, in India itself there was going forward a revolution of no less consequence. The Mauryan empire was overthrown by Pushyamitra Sunga, the Maurya general, in spite of the loyalist minister, a brother-in-law of Yegnasena Śātakarni of the Dekhan. The usurper's strength was tried by a triple war — (1) against Menander, ruler of Kabul, (2) against Kharavēla, the Kalinga ruler of Orissa, (3) against the loyalist Yegnasēna and in behalf of a counter-claimant to the throne of the kingdom of Vidharba. Though for the time successful against all these, the empire had suffered vital injuries. The Dekhan kingdom or viceroyalty becomes so powerful that the Andhrias establish an imperial position themselves, and render their quota of service by holding out against the Śaka invaders from the north-west and west. It must have been

in the course of these wars that the occasion should have arisen for the founding of the era which now goes by the name of Vikramāditya and that under the name of Śaka. As to both these eras and the circumstances of their origin, there is very considerable difference of opinion among scholars. In the course of the political shiftings described above, a clan of the Yueh-chi, by name Kushāna, was able to push its way into India, and establish a kingdom in the Punjab including Kashmir. The greatest ruler among them, whose empire came into touch with the Chinese Empire on the one side and the Parthian on the other, is Kanishka, the Constantine of the Buddhism of the greater vehicle (Mahāyāna Buddhism). Learned scholars associate him with both the eras above referred to, while there are yet others, who would dissociate him from either and refer him to a period later than both. None of them, however, take him beyond the period I have marked at the beginning. At the very beginning of the Christian era then the Punjab and the frontier province, including Kashmir, were under the Kushānas or their

immediate predecessors or their successors Gujarat and Malva, including northern Konkan, were under the Śakas

During the period marked out above, we have been passing from the supremacy of Buddhism (if such an expression can be regarded as appropriate at all), through a reassertion of the Brahman ascendancy, on to a final compromise, ending on the one side in Mahāyānist Buddhism, and on the other, in the Hinduism of the Gita. For as Professor Keis maintains, on the authority of the Tibetan historian Tārānātha and the Saddharma-pundarika, the founder of the Mādhyamika school of Buddhism, Nāgārjuna, was a disciple of the Brahman Rāhulabhadra who was much indebted to Sage Krishna. Paraphrased, this means no less than that these teachers drew a part of their inspiration from the Gita.<sup>2</sup> This is borne out by the importance that attaches to Bhakti (devotion) in Mahāyānist Buddhism and later Hinduism.

During all this period of active mutations

<sup>2</sup> Manual of Indian Buddhism, p. 122.



both in religion and politics, South India would appear to have been out of this great vortex. This is a delusion due more to lack of information than to a lack of history. The edicts of Asoka, as was stated already, mention the Chola, Pāṇḍya, Kērala, Satiyaputna and Ceylon among those with whom he entered into diplomatic relations. He thought it worth his while to send his son and daughter to Ceylon as missionaries. These facts put it beyond a doubt that there was some communication between Magadha and Ceylon, generally by way of the sea. It is now clear from Chapter II that the neighbouring coast was also brought into touch with the north, by way of land. The Ceylonese tradition, as embodied in the *Mahāvamsā*, is quite in support of this conclusion. Between the Mahārāshtra and Malva there was a great trunk road notwithstanding the great forest region between them. This road it is that has given us the name Dekhan (Dakṣiṇā-pathā). Most likely this road wound its way over the hills by way of Buihanpur into western Malva. The middle region was the

forest, which it continued to be even up to the days of Harsha

During this period, and for a long time after, Hindustan (the country north of the Vindhya) kept touch with the outer world by way of land mainly ; the south kept itself in contact with the rest of the world chiefly by way of the sea. That the Hindus did not always wait for others to come to them for goods is in evidence in a variety of ways. There is first the statement of Cornelius Nepos, who says that Q Metellus Celer received from the king of the Suevi some Indians, who had been driven by storm into Germany in the course of a voyage of commerce <sup>3</sup>. This is quite a precise fact, and is borne out by a number of tales of voyages with the horrors attending navigation depicted in the liveliest colours in certain classes of writings both in Sanskrit and Tamil. Among the places mentioned in the latter classes of sources are those in the East Indian Archipelago, such as Java (Śāvham), Sambhava (Kaipūrasambhavam), Katāha (Sumatra), and

<sup>3</sup> 1 Maorindle, *Ancient India* p 110.

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3 1 Maorindle, *Ancient India* p 110.

Kālahm (Burma) not to mention China. It may now be taken for certain that in the sixth and fifth centuries B C there was considerable intercourse with Babylonia<sup>4</sup> and through her with Assyria and the further West. The Bavēru Jātaka is certain proof of this intercourse by way of the sea. It would thus appear that there was some very considerable activity in maritime commerce. They used to have lighthouses to warn ships and one such is described at the great port at the mouth of the Kavery, a brick tower on a big palmyra trunk carrying on the top of it a huge oil lamp.

The classical geographers, the author of the *Periplus* and Ptolemy the geographer, that date respectively about A D 80 and A D 150, exhibit knowledge of a division of the country almost the same as the three divisions indicated in chapter I. The author of *The Periplus*<sup>5</sup> begins his account of the

<sup>4</sup> *The Early Commerce of Babylon with India* 700—300 B C by J Kennedy J R A S 1898, pp. 241—288

<sup>5</sup> *The Periplus of the Erythræan Sea* translated and edited by W H Schoff Secs. 42 to 66

west of India with the Indus (Sinthus) He says that the river had seven mouths, shallow and marshy, and therefore not navigable On the shore of the central channel was the seaport Barbaricum with a capital in the interior of the Scythians called Minnagara (The city of the Min, Scythians), the port Barbaricum has not generally been identified It seems to be the Sanskrit Barbaraka (belonging to the country of the Barbara, and therefore the port of the people, Barbara, perhaps the same as the Gk barbarian) Passing down from there, the Periplus comes down the Surāshstra coast (Syashtrene) and the Rann of Couch (Emmon) sailing across what is the Gulf of Kambay, he takes us to Baiygaza (Sans Barukacha, Mod Broach). With this is supposed to begin Ariaca "which is the beginning of the kingdom of Nambanus and of *all India*" This division of that part of the country into Ariaca is also made by Ptolemy, and in the ports given along this portion of Ariaca both Ptolemy and the Periplus agree except for the omission of some in the latter The southern limit of this coast is Tindis according to both. The correspc-

Greek Rulers succeeding Alexander, among them Apollodotus and Menander. Coming further East from these countries he speaks of Ozene (Ujjain), and refers to it as the former royal capital. Passing over all that he says about the trade of Bioach which is not to our present purpose, we come in Sec 50 to another statement which is of interest to us. He says "beyond Baigasa the adjoining coast extends in a straight line from north to south and so this region is called Dachinabades, for Dachan in the language of the natives means "south." The inland country back from the coast towards the east comprises many desert regions and great mountains, and all kinds of wild beasts, leopards, tigers, elephants, enormous serpents, hyenas, and baboons of many sorts, and many populous nations as far as the Ganges." This clearly indicates that he describes the whole of the region known as the Dakṣhināpatha or the Deccan, and the Dandakāranyam of the Sanskrit writers, the central region of India corresponding to our modern division of the Dekhan. He then describes the interior marts of Paitan and

Tagara, and of the sea-ports along the coast till he reached Naura and Tindis, the first marts of Damuica as he calls them (Sanskrit Dramidaca, the correct equivalent of the Greek) Damuica, sometimes written by error Lymuica, is the Sanskrit Diamidaca which the author must have heard in contradistinction to *Araca*. It is perhaps a little far-fetched to see in it Tamilakam. With Tindis began according to both Ptolemy and the Periplus, the kingdom of Cherabothia (Cheraputra or Keralaputra). The next port of importance we come to, is 50 miles from Tindis again at the mouth of a river, the port called Muziris (Muyiri or Musiri of the Tamils, the modern Cianganore). Fifty miles further south was the sea-port of Nelcynda which the late Mr Kanakasabhai Pillai correctly identified with Nirkuniam in the country of the Pāndyas. This place was situated about ten or twelve miles in the interior with an out-port at the mouth of the river, the village Bacara-Vaikkarai, as we know it now. The kings of both these market towns, the Periplus says "live in the interior." The



imports into Muziris are given "as a great quantity of coin, topaz, thin clothing, not much, figured linens, antimony, coral, crude glass, copper, tin, lead, wine not much but as much as at Barigaza, realgar and orpiment, and wheat only for the sailors, for this is not dealt in by the merchants there." The exports from this place are the "pepper coming from 'Kottanora (Kuttu Nādu in the interior) "great quantities of fine pearls" ivory, silk cloth, spikenard from the Ganges, Malabathrum from the interior, transparent stones of all kinds, diamonds and sapphires and tortoise-shell "That from the Chryse island (golden) and that taken from among the islands along the coast of Damirica" One may so far compare this statement with the following two extracts from Tamil Literature:—

6 கலந்தந்த பொறபரிசும

கழித்தோணியாக கரை சோகருந்து

மலைத்தாரமுங் கடற்குரமுங்

தலைப்பெய்துவருநாககீயும

புனலங்கள்ளின பொலந்தாராகுட்டுவன

முழங்குகடல முழவின முசுரியனன



between Nirkunrum and Camouin as in the country of Aioi (Tamil Āy) Then follows the region which he calls Kaieoi (Tamil Kaiāi or Kaiāiyai, a class of fisherfolk), and the coast country extending from Korkai upwards is spoken of by Ptolemy in two divisions The country of the Batoi (Tamil Vettuvai) and Porālia in the country of the Toringoi (error for Soringoī, Cholas) The exports from this region according to the Peuplus are the pearls <sup>7</sup> gathered from part of what is brought at any time from

<sup>7</sup> Pliny says (Chap IX 54—58)

"Our ladies glory in having pearls suspended from their fingers, or two or three of them dangling from their ears, delighted even with the rattling of the pearls as they knock against each other, and now, at the present day, the poorer classes are even affecting them, as people are in the habit of saying, that 'a pearl worn by a woman in public is as good as a licitor walking before her' Nay, even more than this, they put them on their feet, and that, not only on the laces of their sandals but all over the shoes, it is not enough to wear pearls, but they must tread upon them, and walk with them under foot as well.

"I once saw Lollia Paulina, the wife of the Emperor Caius—it was not at any public festival, or any solemn ceremonial, but only at an ordinary betrothal entertain-

there and a kind of fine muslin called Aigaiatic. The most important ports mentioned in this region by the Periplus are three Canara (identified with Kaveripatnam), Poduca (may be a Puduvai) and it is doubtful whether it stands for Pondicherry or a place in the vicinity. Then Sopatma (Tamil Sopattanam or fortified port). There come ships from what he calls Damuca and from the north for the exchange of commodities. Here the Periplus has an important statement to

ment—covered with emeralds and pearls, which shone in alternate layers upon her head, in her hair, in her wreaths, in her ears, upon her neck, in her bracelets, and on her fingers, and the value of which amounted in all to 40,000,000 sesterces, indeed she was prepared at once to prove the fact, by showing the receipts and acquittances. Nor were these any presents made by a prodigal potentate, but treasures which had descended to her from her grandfather, and obtained by the spoliation of the provinces. Such are the fruits of plunder and extortion! It was for this reason that M. Lollius was held so infamous all over the East for the presents which he extorted from the kings the result of which was, that 'he was denied the friendship of Caius Cæsar, and took poison, and all this was done, I say, that his granddaughter might be seen, by the glare of lamps, covered all over with jewels to the amount of forty millions of sesterces!'

make in respect of the capacity for navigation of the Tamils. In these ports that he mentions, he says were ships of two kinds, those intended for coasting voyages as far as Damirica, as he calls it, these were small and large and are called by him Sangara. Those intended however, for the voyages to Chryse and to the Ganges were called, according to him, Colandia, and are described as very large. The term Chryse which in Greek is the equivalent of gold, seems to refer to Suvainnabhūmi in Sanskrit, and has been identified with the Malaya Peninsula, spoken of by the Periplus in another place as an island. That it indicates the region about the Malaya Peninsula is clear from what he says in regard to the direction of the land, "just opposite this river (Ganges) there is an island in the ocean the last port of the inhabited world to the east under the rising sun itself, it is called Chryse and it has the best tortoise-shell of all the places on the Erythræan Sea. There are said to be imported into these ports everything that is made in Damirica "the greatest part of what is got from

Egypt" Then he proceeds to mention Palæsimundu, "called by the ancients Tapio-bane" Further north from this, according to him, was the region Masalia and further north of this Dosarene (Sans Daśārna) Ptolemy however interpolates between the Chola coast and Maisalia (Masalia of the Periplus) the country of the Arouvainoi or Arvainoi (the Aruvalai of the Tamils) whose country was known to the Tamils in two divisions Aruvānādu and Aruvā Vada Talai (northern Aruva) which would take us more or less close to the mouth of the Krishna river, the Maisalos of Ptolemy

Of the trade of this coast, the most important ports are the three referred to already, and the imports of trade are set down. "Everything made in Damirica and the greatest part of what is brought at any time from Egypt comes here together with most kinds of all the things that are brought from Damirica and of those that are carried through Paralia "

We have similar reference to the imports at Kaveripatam in the Tamil work Pattinap-

pāli " horses were brought from distant lands beyond the seas, pepper was brought in ships, gold and precious stones came from the northern mountains, sandal and abhu came from the mountains towards the west, pearls from the southern seas and coral from the eastern seas The produce of the regions watered by the Ganges, all that is grown on the banks of the Kavery, articles of food from Īlam or Ceylon and the manufactures of Kālakam in Burma "8 This looks like a re-statement in a somewhat expanded form of what is found briefly stated in the Periplus. Such was the condition of industry and commerce of this land as far as it is possible for us to picture this condition from the evidence available to us

## II *Internal condition political, industrial &c*

To take up the political geography of south India as a whole then, the country south of the Krishna was divided among 'the three crowned kings' and seven chieftains, with an eighth coming somewhat later. There were

8 Pattinappālai II 127 ff and Mr Kanakasabhai's Tamils 1,800 years ago, p 27

a host of minor chieftains of lesser repute. It is the coast region and the more open country that belonged to the kings, while the middle regions of hills and forests belonged to the chieftains, and perhaps even a few tribes (Nagas and others). The east coast from near the mouth of the Krishna to the south of Tondī in the Zamindari of Ramnad, belonged to the Chola, although midway between the kingdom proper and its northern viceroyalty of Kanchi lay the hill-country round Tirukoilur, in the possession of a class of chieftains named Malayaman, very often loyal supporters of their suzerain, occasionally truculent and rebellious. South of the Chola kingdom lay that of the Pāndya, which extended from coast to coast, and embraced within its borders the modern districts of Madura and Tinneveli, and the State of Travancore, taking in also a part of Coimbatore and Cochin. This included in it the chieftaincies of Āay (the Aloi of Ptolemy) round the Podyil hill in the western ghats, and of Evvi round about the port of Korkai in Tinneveli. There were besides the do-



mains of Pēhan round the Palnis which comes under their sphere of influence as well North of this and along the western ghats on the sea-side lay the territory of the Chera a territory stretching right across the Palghat gap through Salem and Coimbatore South Mysore was parcelled out among a number of chieftains corresponding to the modern Palayagars, whose allegiance was at the disposal of either, but the more powerful, of their neighbour kings Such were the Iṅgō of Arayam, Pāri of Parambunad, Adiyamān of Tagadūr (Dharmapurī) and Ōri of the Kolli-malais The first of these was within the Mysore territory proper, and to the east of his domain lay the Gangas, and Kongu to the south The northern frontier of the Tamil land was held by Nannan of the Tulu country in the West, and Pulli of Vēngadam (Tirupati) in the east, the further north having been the land of the Āiyas (Vadukar) and Dandā-ranyam (Sans. Dandakāraṇyam)

These chieftaincies were the bone of contention between the Cholas and the Cheras When the period under treatment begins, the

Cholas are supreme under Karikāla, who ascended the throne, probably after defeating the Chēra and Pāndya in a battle at Vennil (Koilverni as it is now called) in the Tanjore district. He was a remarkable sovereign who, in many ways, contributed to the permanent welfare of his subjects, and has consequently been handed down to posterity as a beneficent and wise monarch. He constructed the embankments for the Kavery, and his chief port Puhai was the great emporium of the east coast. His reign was long and, taken along with those of his two predecessors and the successor next following him, constitutes the period of the first Chola ascendancy in the south. In the reign of his successor a great catastrophe befell Puhai, and the city and port were both destroyed. This was a hard blow to the ascendancy of the Cholas. But Karikāla had, after defeating his contemporary Chera, given one of his daughters in marriage to the son of his vanquished rival. This alliance stood the Cholas in good stead. Karikāla's successor began his reign with a victory, which his hen-apparent won for him,

against the Chera and Pāṇḍya combined, at Kāriyāṇ, probably in the Salem district. When Puhar was destroyed there was a civil war, owing perhaps to the untimely death of the young Chola prince, and the Chera ruler for the time being, advanced through the central region. He intervened in favour of his cousins with effect, as against the rival claimants of royal blood, and restored the Chola dynasty to some power, but the ascendancy surely enough passed from them to the Chera. The Chera ascendancy under the Red-Chera (Śenguttuvan) lasted only one generation, in the reign of his successor the Pāṇḍyas rose to greater importance and the Chera suffered defeat and imprisonment at his hands. This Pāṇḍya ascendancy probably lasted on somewhat longer till about the rise of the Pallavas in Kanchi. This course of the political centre of gravity in southern India is borne out in very important particulars by the Ceylon Chronicle, called the *Mahāvamsā*. According to this work, the Cholas were naturally the greatest enemies of the Singalese rulers. There were usurpers from

the Chola country in Ceylon in the first century B C , and there were invasions and counter-invasions as well. On one occasion the Chola invaders carried away 12,000 inhabitants of Ceylon and set them to work at 'the Kavery' as the Chronicle has it <sup>9</sup>. This looks very much like an exploit of Karikāla seeing that it was he who built the city of Puhāi. King Gajabāhu of Ceylon was present at the invitation of the Red-Chera, to witness the celebration of a sacrifice and the consecration of the temple to the 'Chaste Lady' (Pattinī Dēvi) at Vanji, on the west coast.

The ascendancy of the Chera, however, passed away, as already mentioned, to the Pāndyas in the course of one single generation. The Red Chera was succeeded by his son, 'the Chera of the elephant look,' who was his father's viceroy at Tondī, and figured prominently in the wars of his predecessor in the middle region. He was defeated and taken prisoner in a battle, which he had to fight with the contemporary Pāndyan, designated the victor, at Talayālangānam. With this

<sup>9</sup> Upham's *Mahāvamsa*, Vol 1, p 228

mishap to the ruler the Chera ascendancy passes away. The Pāndyans of Madura take their turn now, and continued to hold the position of hegemony up to the time that the Pallavas rise into importance. This, in brief and in very general terms, was the political history of South India at the beginning and during the early centuries of the Christian Era.

Passing on from the political to the industrial condition of India, we have already described the principal sea-ports, both on the western and eastern seaboard. If, as has been pointed out, there were so many thriving ports and, if foreign merchants sought these for trade at considerable risk of pirates and, if there was so much enterprise in sea-going among the inhabitants of the country itself, the conclusion is irresistible that the country had a prosperous industry, and so, on examination, it appears certainly, to have been. Apart from the complaints of Petronius that fashionable Roman ladies exposed their charms much too immodestly by clothing themselves in the 'webs of woven wind', as he

called the muslins imported from India, Pliny says that India drained the Roman empire annually to the extent of 55,000,000 sesterces, equal to £486, 979<sup>10</sup> sending in return goods which sold at a hundred times their value in India<sup>11</sup> He also remarks in another place, 'this is the price we pay for our luxuries and our women'

That the industrial arts had received attention and cultivation in early times in India is in evidence to the satisfaction of the most sceptical mind. The early Tamils divided arts into six groups: ploughing (meaning thereby agriculture), handicrafts, painting, commerce and trade, the learned arts, and lastly the fine arts. Of these, agriculture and commerce were regarded as of the first importance. Flourishing trade pre-supposes a volume of industry, the principal of which was weaving then, as it also has been until recently. Cotton, silk and wool seem to have been the materials that

<sup>10</sup> Mommsen gives the total £11,000,000, £6,000,000 for Arabia, £5,000,000 for India

<sup>11</sup> Malabar Manual. Vol 1, pp 150 1

were wrought into cloths. Among the woollens we find mention of manufactures from the wool of rats, which was regarded as particularly warm. There are thirty varieties of silks mentioned, each with a distinctive appellation of its own, as distinguished from the imported silks of China which had a separate name. The character of the cotton stuffs that were manufactured is indicated by the comparisons instituted between them and, 'sloughs of serpents' or 'vapour from milk', and the general description of these as 'those fine textures the thread of which could not be followed even by the eye'.

The chief exports from the country, as the author of the *Periplus* says, were these 'The produce of the soil like pepper, great quantities of the best pearl are likewise purchased here, ivory, silk in the web, spikenard from the Ganges, Malabathrum from the countries further to the east, transparent stones of all sorts, diamonds, rubies and tortoise-shell from the golden Chersonese or from the islands off the coast of Damirikē. This is all from the port of Muziris on the west coast

He goes on to say 'There is a great resort of shipping to this port for pepper and malabathrum, the merchants bring out a large quantity of spice, and their other imports are topazes, stibium, coral, flint, glass, brass, and lead, a small quantity of wine as profitable as at Barugaza, cinnabar, fine cloth, arsenic and wheat, not for sale but for the use of the crew That Pliny's complaint about the drain was neither imaginary nor hypersensitive is in evidence in a passage descriptive of Muziris in one of the ancient classics of Tamil literature <sup>12</sup> 'Musiri to which come the well-rigged ships of the Yavanas, bringing gold and taking away spices in exchange'

Regarding the trade of the east coast, here follows to imports into of Puhai 'Horses were brought from distant lands beyond the seas, pepper was brought in ships gold and precious stones came from the northern mountains towards the west, pearl from the southern seas and coral from the eastern seas The produce of the region watered by the Ganges,

<sup>12</sup> See note 6 p 120 above



all that is grown on the banks of the Kavery, articles of food from Īlam (Ceylon) and the manufactures of Kālaham (Burma),<sup>13</sup> were brought there for sale as was stated already. The products of particular importance received in the port of Tondī (East or Chola Tondī in the Ramnaḍ Dt) are aghir (a kind of black aromatic wood), fine silk, camphor, silk stuff (from China), candy, sandal, scents, and these articles and salt were carried into the interior by means of wagons drawn by teams of oxen, slowly trudging along through town and village, effecting exchanges with commodities for export. Tolls were paid on the way, and the journey from the coast up the plateau and back again occupied many months. A brisk and thriving commerce with the corresponding volume of internal trade argues peace, and the period to which the above description will apply must have been a period of general peace in the Peninsula. They did not forget in those days to maintain a regular customs establishment, the officials of which

<sup>13</sup> Pattinapālai, 127 ff, and The Tamils 1800 years ago p. 27

piled up the grain and stored up the things that could not immediately be measured and appraised, leaving them in the dockyards carefully sealed with the tiger signet of the king <sup>14</sup>

The Tamils built their own ships, and in the other crafts of the skilled artisan they seem to have attained some proficiency, though they availed themselves of experts from distant places. In the building of the royal palace at Puhai, skilled artisans from Magadha, mechanics from Marādam (Maharatta), smiths from Avantī (Malva), carpenters from Yavana, worked <sup>15</sup> together with the artisans of the Tamil land. There is mention of a temple of the most beautiful workmanship in the same city, built by the Gujjaias <sup>16</sup>. In the building of forts and in the providing of them with weapons and missiles, both for offence and defence, the Tamils had attained to something like perfection. Twenty-four such weapons are mentioned among the defences of Madura.

<sup>14</sup> Paṭṭinappālai, 134-6

<sup>15</sup> Maṇimēkhalai, Canto xix, 11 107 and ff

<sup>16</sup> Ibid xviii 1, 145

Passing from the industrial to the literary, social and religious condition of the south, which we have so far been considering, we have again to do with the three kingdoms, each with a capital city and a premier port. The Cholas had their capital at Urayyūr, with Puhar for an alternative capital and chief port, the Pāndyas had their capital at Madurai, with the port and premier viceroyalty at Korkai, the Cheras had their capital at Vanji, with the principal port and viceroyalty at Tondi. The Cholas had their premier viceroy, who was generally the heir apparent, or at least a prince of the blood, at Kanchi. These towns and ports, therefore, bulk very largely in the literature and literary traditions of the period. The road from Kanchi to Trichinopoly appears to have passed through Tirukkoilur. From Trichinopoly (*i.e.* Urayyūr) to Madurai it lay along the more arid parts of the Tanjore district to Kodumbai in the state of Pudukotta, and thence to Nedumgulam, from which place the road broke into three, and led up to Madurai in three branches. From this last town a road kept close to the

banks of the river Vaigai up to the Palnis and from there it went up the hills and down again along the banks of the Periyār to the town of Vanji, situated near its mouth. There were also other roads besides, one at least, from Vanji to the modern Karoor and thence on to Tirukkōilūr

These roads were not safe in all parts alike, there being certain portions of them that passed through desert regions, inhabited by wild tribes, who were a cause of terror to the wayfarers, particularly those who had something to lose, notwithstanding the fact that robbery was punished with nothing short of impalement. Journeys were none the less frequent for purposes of pilgrimage, or in search of patronage for learning, or for the profits of commerce

The rulers in those days held before them high ideals of government. Their absolute authority was limited by the 'five great assemblies,' as they were called, of ministers, priests, generals, heralds, (spies), and ambassadors. These may be the same as the Pancha-mahā-pradhānas of Sanskrit, and may be the same

as the Mahāmātras associated with the princely viceroys of the Asoka Inscriptions. There appear to have been a general permit for a learned Brahman to speak his mind in any durbar, and these Brahmans often gave out their opinions most fearlessly. This privilege was similarly accorded also to men of learning. I give a few instances in illustration. A Brahman pilgrim from the Chola country happened to be present at the Chera court, when the Chera King gave orders to his ministers to set his army in motion to avenge an insult that some northern princes, he was told, had given him. The minister's remonstrance and the reluctance of the general were overruled. This Brahman got up and pointed out, in a speech, that he had warred for the fifty years of his reign in order to safeguard his earthly interests but had done very little to provide for himself in the life to come. Of course the expedition was countermanded, and the king began to make provision for the future. A young Pāṇḍya king of the next generation showed himself too enthusiastic for war, and it fell to the lot of one of the poets at court to wean him of

this was a ruse. In a poem of 850 lines he conveyed the hint to the king.<sup>17</sup> If language can be conceived as the art of concealing thought, here is an instance par excellence. The next instance takes us to the court of Vaiyyāvikkōnperum-Pēhan who neglected his wife Kannaki. A number of poets of the first rank interceded and restored him to her. The next case that I will mention here is that of a poet, who enjoyed the patronage of successive Chola rulers. He found that at the end of a civil war the victorious Chola was about to put to death his vanquished cousin. The poet pointed out that the victory tarnished the good name of the Cholas, quite as much as the defeat, and that he did not know whether to rejoice for the victorious Chola or weep for the vanquished one. The intercession was certainly effective. These illustrations show in addition the respect that learning commanded. I shall permit myself one more illustration to show this respect. The warlike Pāndya referred to already, came to the throne young. He

<sup>17</sup> This is the famous piece known as Maduraikkanji, one of the Pattuppattu collection.

had immediately to go to war against a combination of his two neighbours and his court was naturally anxious as to the result. The young prince in a poem, full of poetic grace assured them that he would return victorious and that if he should fail, the poets of his court including Māngudi Marudan, might cease to attend.

The ideal of justice set before them in those days was something unattainable. They strove their utmost to attain to the sublimity of their ideal, and a king was judged good or bad upon the degree of success he achieved in this particular branch of his duties. 'Oh the king he is to blame if the rains fail, he is to blame if women go astray. What is there in a king's estate except perpetual anxiety, that people should envy the position of a king for!' Learning went in search of patronage. There must have been a very considerable output of literature. It was doubtless to check the growth of the weed of learning that a body of censors called the Śāṅgam must have been instituted. It is a number of works, which are believed to have received the imprimatur of

this learned body, that has been the source of all this information regarding this period. This is not the place to enter into the question of the origin of Tamil literature, or of its independence or otherwise, or of its connexion with the literature of Sanskrit. But I may remark in passing that Tamil literature (as distinct from language) cannot lay claim to that independence that its votaries demand for it with more zeal than argument. Learning was somewhat widespread and much sought after. Women had their share of learning, as the number of women poets indicates. Nor was this learning confined to the Brahman although he was the sole custodian of the ‘northern lore’.

In matters religious there was a happy confusion. Jains, Buddhists, Brahmans, Śaivas, Vaiṣṇavas, and people of other persuasions both major and minor, all lived together and at peace with one another. ‘There were splendid temples in the city dedicated to the worship of the celestial tree Kalpaka, (the wish giving tree), the celestial elephant Airāvata. Vairāda (the thunderbolt of Indra



Sūrya, Chāndīa, Śīva, Subramanya. Sāta-vāhana, (Aiyānāi in Tamil or Sāsta in Mal and Sans ) Jina or Nirgiatha, Kama (god of love), and Yama (God of death) There were seven vihāras reputed to have been built by Indra, the king of the gods, in which dwelt no less than 300 monks (Buddhistic) The temple of Yama was outside the walls of the town, in the burial ground in the city of Puhar, the capital of the Cholas The three rival systems of the Brahmans, and those of the Jains and Buddhists flourished together each with its own clientele unhampered by the others in the prosecution of its own holy rights The Brahman was not regarded an inconvenience, but the general feeling was that he was indispensable to the prosperity of the state A devout Buddhist and an ascetic Jain prince both speak of him with great respect He was the custodian of the hidden lore, (மறை, the Veda) he was the guardian of the sacred fire, the source of material prosperity to the state , he was the person who performed the sacrifices according to the difficult orthodox rites, and who brought timely rain.

These are the terms in which these heterodox writers refer to him. He had a function in society and he discharged it faithfully. The whole attitude both of the orthodox and also of the heterodox, in matters religious, was the pity of the one for the ignorance of the other, but nothing more bitter, as Max Muller has very well pointed out.

Animism seems to have played an important part in the religious system of those days. There was a temple consecrated to the 'Chaste Lady' (Pattini Devi), as she was called, who died in consequence of the murder of her husband. Her images are preserved in temples up to the present times for, according to Dr A K Kumarasami,<sup>18</sup> some of the images depicted in illustration of the ancient art of Ceylon are of this deified woman. Sati was in vogue, but under well recognised limitations. This was permitted only to woman, who had neither natural guardians to fall back upon, nor children to bring up. That it was not uncommon for young women to

<sup>18</sup> J.R.A.S. 1909, p. 292

return to their parents widowed is vouched for by a comparison that a poet institutes between the approach of darkness and the return of the widowed young woman, whose husband had lately fallen in war. Annual festivals were celebrated with great *éclat*, and one of the grandest was that to Indra celebrated at Puhai. I have gathered my facts from a vast body of Tamil literature only recently made available to the student. I now proceed to consider the sources of the information, which are the classical writers, Indian literature, Tamil and Sanskrit, and the Ceylonese chronicle. Of the first group, Strabo wrote in the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius, Pliny published his geography in A D 77, the *Periplus of the Erythrænean Sea* was written in the first century A D probably A D 60 but not later than A D 80, Ptolemy wrote his geography about A D 150, the *Peutingerian Tables* were composed in A D 222. There were other writers who wrote later, but we are not concerned with them directly. I would draw attention to three points, taken from the works of classical writers

Pliny remarks 'At the present-day voyages, are made to India every year, and companies, of archers are carried on board, because the Indian seas are infested by pirates' Later on he says 'It (Muziris) is not a desirable place of call, pirates being in the neighbourhood, who occupy a place called Nitrias, and besides it is not well supplied with wares for traffic' This was before A D 77 Ptolemy regarded this port Muziris as an emporium, and places the country of Aioi south of Bakarai Though Ptolemy does mark the division of the Konkan coast extending northwards of Nitra (Nitrias of Pliny) and up to the port of Mandagara, which is identified with some place not yet definitely accepted in the southern Mahiatta country north of Goa, as Ariake Andion Penaton, meaning the Ariaka of the pirates in his time, says no more of pirates at all, meaning there was no piracy, &c The Periplus on the contrary does make mention of the piratic character of this coast and gives a straightforward account of its active prevalence at the time in regard to the ports in the neighbourhood The bearing

of this we shall see presently <sup>19</sup> The *Pentingerian Tables* state clearly that two Roman

<sup>19</sup> The following account from Marco Polo of this coast is worth noting

"There go forth every year more than a hundred corsair vessels on cruise These pirates take with them their wives and children, and stay out the whole summer Their method is to join in fleets of 20 or 30 of these pirate vessels together, and then they form what they call a sea cordon, that is, they drop off till there is an interval of 5 or 6 miles between ship and ship, so that they cover something like a hundred miles of sea, and no merchant ship can escape them For when any one corsair sights a vessel a signal is made by fire or smoke, and then the whole of them make for this, and seize the merchants and plunder them After they have plundered them they let them go, saying, 'Go along with you and get more gain, and that mayhap will fall to us also !' But now the merchants are aware of this, and go so well manned and armed, and with such great ships, that they don't fear the corsairs Still mishaps do befall them at times "

He also notes in respect of the kingdom of Ely the following —

"If any ship enters their estuary and anchors there, having been bound for some other port, they seize her and plunder the cargo. For they say, 'You were bound for somewhere else, and 'tis God has sent you hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods,' And they think it is no sin to act thus And this naughty custom prevails all over the provinces of India, to wit, that if a

cohorts were maintained in the same town for the protection of Roman commerce

Mr Sewell, who has made an elaborate study of the Roman coins found in India, considers that an examination of the coin-finds lead to the following conclusions <sup>20</sup>

1 There was hardly any commerce between Rome and India during the Consulate.

With Augustus began an intercourse which, enabling the Romans to obtain oriental luxu-

ship is driven by stress of weather into some other port than that to which it was bound, it was sure to be plundered. But if a ship came bound originally to the place, they receive it with all honor and give it due protection "

It would be interesting to note as Yule remarks that it was in this neighbourhood that Ibn Batuta fell into the hands of pirates and was 'stripped to the very drawers' That region continued to be piratical up to the days of Clive and Watson as we know In the days of Sivaji it continued to be piratical also, as he is said to have replied to an English embassy protesting against this piracy that "it was against the laws of Conchon" "to restore any ship or goods that were driven ashore" The central Asian ambassador Abd-er-Razzak has something to say of pirates near the Calicut coast.

Marco Polo Yule and Cordier (3rd Edn ) III Chap XXIV and XXV pp 385 392

<sup>20</sup> J.R.A.S., 1904, p. 591.

ries during the early days of the empire, culminated about the time of Nero, who died A.D. 68

3. From this time forward the trade declined till the date of Caracalla, A D 217

4 From the date of Caracalla it almost entirely ceased

5 It revived again, though slightly, under the Byzantine emperors

He also infers that the trade under the early emperors was in luxuries, under the later ones in industrial products, and under the Byzantines the commerce was with the south-west coast only, and not with the interior. He differs from those who find an explanation of this fluctuation in the political and social condition of India itself, and the facilities or their absence for navigating the seas, and considers that the cause is to be sought for in the political and social condition of Rome

From an examination of the second class of my sources of information alone, we find that there was a period when South India was under great rulers, who gave the country peace

and thus provided the indispensable security for commerce. This period can be shown to correspond to that of the Roman empire from Augustus to Caracalla. After this period, we find the country in a condition of political flux. So then we may still find one, at least, of the most potent causes of this commercial decline in the internal condition of India itself. Pliny and Ptolemy do not mention the Roman cohorts at Muziris which the *Peutingerian Tables* do. The first exploit of the Red Chera's father is the destruction of the Kadambu<sup>21</sup> tree on the sea coast. Another compliment that the poets never miss an opportunity of bestowing upon this Red-Chera himself is that the Chera fleet sailed on the waters of that littoral with a sense of dominion and security. The Kadambu mentioned above is

21 (1) பலா மொசினதோம பியதிரள பூங்கடம்பின  
கடியுடை முழு முதறுமியவேய

II 11 II. 12 13

(2) கடம்பு முதறடித கடுஞ்சின வேந்தே

II. 12 1 3

(3) துளககு பிடுருடைய மாககடனீககிக

கடம்பறு ததியறறிய வலம படுவியனபனை

II 17. II 5 6



explained as a tree of extraordinary power which could not be cut down by ordinary man. I rather think from the context that it has reference to a mythical rendezvous of the tribe of people who became known as the Kadambas later. This view seems to be directly countenanced by the extract 3 on the last page which says in effect that he crossed the sea, destroyed the Kadambu and brought his enemies to subjection to him.<sup>22</sup> If this view be correct, the advent of the said Chera brought along with it security. This would be in conformity with Ptolemy's reference to Āay, who was one of the seven chieftains known to literature as 'the last seven patrons'. From the body of works known to Tamil scholars as Śāṅgam works then contemporaneity could easily be established. I have examined this question elsewhere (in the Appendix on The Augustan

<sup>22</sup> It would be nothing surprising if the Kadambu tree, the country-date or some tree like it had been the tree totem of this tribe. One tree in particular might have been regarded as peculiarly sacred by the tribe like the famous Oak at Dodona of the ancient Greeks or the slightly less famous Oak trunk of the Saxons of the days of Charlemagne.

Age of Tamil Literature), and find the name Āy a distinctive name of two individuals, and not quite of a family. The Āy must have been the contemporary of, or a little older than, Ptolemy, and the age of Ptolemy would practically be the age of the Red-Chera, and the Chera ascendancy. This conclusion only confirms what has been arrived at independently of this class of evidence. Gajabāhu of Ceylon, who visited the Red-Chera almost at the end of his reign, ruled according to the Ceylonese chronicle from A D 113 to 135. Allowing for the difference between the Ceylonese date of the Nirvana of the Buddha, and that arrived at by modern scholars, as Dr Fleet, namely sixty years, that date for Gajabāhu would be A D 173 to 193. The Chera ascendancy then would cover the latter two-thirds of the second century A D. Here has to be brought in the Paisāchi work Bṛhat Kathā. Among the temples mentioned as having been found at Puhar was one dedicated to Sātavāhana. This personage was the ruler in whose court flourished the minister Gunādya, who was the author of                    stupendo

which stands at the root of all romantic literature in India, whether in Sanskrit or any vernacular, and may be of the rest of the world as well. It was a translation of this work that set the fashion in Tamil for the composition of the romantic epics. The age of the original is still matter under investigation. The latest authority on the question is the Dutch scholar Speyer, who would place it in the third century A D at the earliest—a date clearly impossible according to our line of inquiry. I shall not say more about it here now, but only remark that one of the works clearly based upon this, has to be referred to a period anterior to the astronomer, Varāhamihira A D 533. This work, MANI-MĒKHALA refers to the asterism under which the Buddha was born as the fourteenth, which, according to the modern computation, following Varāhamihira, ought to be the seventeenth. The Ceylon Chronicle also deserves to be investigated more carefully. So far investigations from different points of view only appear to confirm its chronology, except for the possible correction made above.

The date of the death of Caracalla corresponds closely to the disappearance of the Sāta-vāhanas of the Dekhan. According to the latest opinion the power of the Kushanās also vanished about the same period. In South India likewise the Pāndya ascendancy passes into darkness. The century following is one of the dark spots in Indian History, until the rise of the Guptas in the north of the Chālukyas in the Dekhan, and of the Pallavas in the south.

Before closing, I may refer to the conclusions of a scholar, T. C. Evans, who has studied the India of this period in a thesis, *Greek and Roman India*, contributed to the *Anglo-American Magazine* for 1901. He concludes that "The Greek invader found there an ancient and highly organised society differing little in its usages and modes of living from those which exist at the present time; and although there are no means of verifying the conjecture, it is not unlikely that the population of the peninsula was as great in that period as in our own." Commenting on this, my friend Mr. W.H.

Commercial Museum makes the following remarks "If this view is correct, India was the most populous region of the world at the time of the Periplus, as it was the most cultivated, the most active, industrial and commercial, the most highly organised socially, *the most wretched in the poverty of its teeming millions and the least powerful politically*"

He further follows that "the economic status of the country made it impossible that any one of these should possess political force commensurate with its population, resources and industries. It was made up of village communities, and organised military power only so far as they were compelled to do so, and they were relatively unconcerned in the dynastic changes, except to note the change in their oppressors." While there is a great deal that is just in these remarks, some of them fail to take note of the time, and the circumstances, on which we are passing judgment from our twentieth century standard of political justice. The very extent of the country and the necessarily inferior character of the communications would

make any other organisation than that of the village communities inefficient in the extreme. It is true perhaps that they had not the military power necessary for all time, but such as it was it often proved at any rate equal to the strain imposed upon it, often by successfully defending the country against foreigners. After all there is the possibility of a difference of ideal in organisation. A society essentially organised for peace and its requirements is certainly defectively organised for purposes of war. If the Hindu society at any time had been organised on any basis, it certainly was on the basis of peace and the happiness of the bulk of the people. It is this ideal that has the merit as well as the defect of Hindu organisations throughout the history of India. It is not difficult to understand by a comparison of the organisation of the British Empire at the present time which can be looked upon as having been made on an economic basis, with that of the German empire, which,

rather to be said to the credit of the early Hindus that they regarded war so far an abnormal state of affairs that they had to provide for it only in an exceptional sort of way, and this is evident both in their organisation for peace, and in that of war, as far as it is possible for us to make out from the material available to us. About the very time of the Periplus, the Tamilian rulers of the West coast were quite able to hold their own as against the Greeks on the sea, and, though finally vanquished, it was the Punjab armies that made a very good stand against Alexander. Chandragupta could even lay claim to a victory against the most redoubtable of Alexander's generals. These instances ought to make us pause before accepting sweeping statements either as to military incapacity or to unfairly uneven distribution of property in the organisation of Indian society. I may quote here an address that a poet made to a king, a particularly warlike one, on the ideals that he ought to set before him at a time when there was perhaps some need for war. Here is a literal translation of the passage as far as a

beautiful Tamil poem could be rendered into English prose "Like the single eye that adorns the Majestic crescent face of Śiva, who, with Mount Meru for his bow, the great serpent for its string, destroyed the triple fortifications of the Rākshasas to give victory to the valiant host of the Devas, O Maia, of the flower garland! Great among Kings, great though your army may count, elephants of high mettle, horses of exceeding fleetness, high cars with tall flags and valiant soldiers eager for war, remember the Majesty of a monarch lies foremost in his walking the path of rectitude Therefore may you be blessed with long life, without swerving ever so little from the path of rectitude because the people concerned are ours, without in the least discounting the good found in those not of us, may your valour shine with the brilliance of the sun May your power of protection show in it all the beneficent coolness of the moon May your charity be as seasonal and impartial as that of the rain itself With the three



ashore by the winds, on the coast of Śendil (Tiruchendur) where stands the great Kumāra " It would only be fair to the ancients to give them the ordinary credit of then having honestly attempted to pursue the ideal they set before themselves

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE ŚĀNGAM WORKS, SO CALLED, OF TAMIL LITERATURE

THIS subject has been, for very near a century, regarded as of the utmost importance by those engaged in research work as well as by those engaged in the study of Tamil, the eldest among the sisterhood of languages known commonly as the Dravidian languages. In the early years of the last century Bishop Caldwell made what perhaps was then the most successful attempt at fixing the age of this body of literature and brought what he called 'the Augustan Age of Tamil Literature' to the 9th or 10th century of the Christian era. Since then there have been a series of attempts several of them merely re-stating Caldwell's conclusions, while various others were made to controvert them and give a higher antiquity to this Augustan Age. Th

Caldwell's Comparative Grammar allow the following statement to remain — "The Period of the predominance of Jainas (the predominance in intellect and learning give rarely a predominance in political power) was the Augustan Age of Tamil literature, the period when the Madura College, a literary association, appears to have flourished and when the Kural, Chintāmani, and classical vocabularies and grammars written"<sup>1</sup> This period is ascribed to the 9th or 10th century A D and the editors are content to leave this with a foot note "Modern researches point to a much earlier date than that given here" This Caldwellian tradition has been handed on almost unbroken to the present time We find the statement repeated with hardly any modification in Reinhold Rost's article on Tamil, in the 11th edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica, and with some slight modification

<sup>1</sup> What ever else may be proved or no, this old classification, by religion, of periods either of literature or art must be given up as it finds no support of any kind to justify its being kept up

in Frazer's "A Literary History of India" and the new edition of the Imperial Gazetteer Volume, II. This position did not go unchallenged, however. It was the late Mr P. Sundaram Pillai of Tiruvandrum who took up the challenge first. In one or two essays that he contributed on this particular subject he did much destructive work, but did not essay in constructive work, relating to this particular period, though it must be said to his credit that he succeeded in fixing, one or two milestones in Tamil Literature. The greatest constructive effort was made by another lamented Tamil scholar, the late Mr Kanakasabhai Pillai, whose work, however, was marred by a too ambitious attempt at working out details before the main lines could hardly be regarded as fixed. This defect notwithstanding, his work brought together a great deal of matter which had remained buried in manuscripts inaccessible even to the learned, and understood, if accessible, by but a few. This work was done by him in the last decade of the last century and in the

first two or three years of the present. It was about the end of this scholar's work that a much respected European Scholar, connected intimately with Madras, both as occupying an honoured place upon the High Court bench, and holding the position of the Vice-Chancellorship of our University, took up the question and restated the case in support of Caldwell's theory with much force, considerable learning and great judgment. This was the late Mr L C Innes who discussed the whole question of the various periods of Tamil literature in what was then the Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review, in an article entitled the Age of Mānikkavāsagai. One small identification in it in the fixing of this Augustan Age drew my attention to this particular investigation and I raised by no means a respectful protest against it in a short article which I contributed to the Christian College Magazine. The letter that he wrote in reply to this protest, of which I sent him a printed copy, led me on, thanks to the stimulus of that judicial minded good man to, make an effort at fixing this Augustan Age

from my point of view "The Augustan Age of Tamil Literature" was written by me in the first instance for the Madras Review and published, again in a somewhat modified form, in the Indian Antiquary as a general introduction to a contemplated series of articles on "Celebrities in Tamil Literature," poets and patrons alike This was again published, with permission, by the Tamilian Archaeological Society in the Tamil Antiquary The essay attempted to set forth the then available evidence both literary and historical leading to the following conclusions —

(1) "That there was an age of great literary activity in Tamil to warrant the existence of a body like the traditional Śāṅgam"

(2) "That the period of the greatest Śāṅgam activity was the age when Śeṅguṭṭuvan Sēra was a prominent character in South Indian politics"

(3) "That this age of Śeṅguṭṭuvan was the second century of the Christian era "

(4) "That these conclusions find support in what is known of the later history of South India

Since this was published there have been to my knowledge two constructive efforts of which one is that contained in a life of Śenguttuvan in Tamil written by Pandit M Ragava Aiyangar of the Tamil Lexicon Office, read in the first instance as an essay before the Tamil Śangam at its meeting in Ramnad in May 1913. The other is a final statement, of various efforts in detail in regard to this matter by Mr Subramaniya Iyer, Assistant Epigraphist to the Government of Madras, in the Christian College Magazine of the year 1914, in an article entitled the Ancient History of the Pāṇḍya Country. I propose attempting to examine the position of these two scholars and restate my case in the light of the criticism thus made to see how far my position has to be revised and to what extent it requires to be altered.

Taking the latter first the point that calls for attention is that he relies, for settling this much disputed chronology, on a few copper plate grants of the Pāṇḍya Kings, and one or two stone inscriptions relating to them, and hopes from these aids to settle the question

finally. The following long extracts from his paper would exhibit his position in respect of the others who had carried on similar investigations before him most fairly to himself

‘As has been remarked already the dates when these poems were composed are not given anywhere To settle this question with any amount of probability, we are naturally forced to look for information from external sources Even in this direction, there was not much to help us till recently The discovery of the Sinnamanur plates and the information supplied in the Velvikudī grant of the Pāṇḍya kings have placed a lot of reliable matter before the earnest student of ancient history and a careful examination of their contents is sure to enable him to arrive at a satisfactory solution which has all along been sought for in vain The previous scarcity of materials served only to mislead inquirers <sup>2</sup>

‘For purposes of history we can freely adopt the accounts given in *Puranānūru*, *Pattup-*

<sup>2</sup> A fuller Examination of these follows in *Ch. vii*



pāttu, Padīrruppattu, etc. These poems have been edited in an admirable way by Mahāmahōpādya V Swaminathier who gives now and then short notices of Aham which has not yet appeared in print. Although Śilappadikāram and Manimēkhalai are classed among the Śāngam works, I entertain serious doubts as to whether they speak of contemporary kings and events, and it may be said that great caution is necessary before utilising wholesale the materials contained in them. I know *I am mortally wounding the feelings of several savants of Tamil literature who would at once pour forth a volume of abuse if I were considered a worthy rival of theirs*. Fortunately I am not such a one. But all the same I wish to record here my reasons for holding the position. The two works in question contain a romantic account of a certain Kannagi famed for chastity and of Manimēkhalā the daughter of a hetaira of Kannagi's husband Kōvalan. Enraged at an unreasonable murder of her husband, Kannagi miraculously sets fire to the city of Madura, whereupon the Pandya king struck down by

remorse for the unjust act *kills himself*<sup>3</sup> A heavenly palanquin is seen to descend to earth to carry Kannagi to the abode of the gods The people who observed this, erect a shrine for her worship and this is at once followed by the initiation of the same worship in other countries both in and out of India The romantic nature of the story will not fail to strike any one at the very outset I for one would not grant that it relates to contemporary events On the other hand it would be natural to view the legend as a story spun out by the poets, if not wholly from their imagination, at least with liberal addition to traditional beliefs extant at the time, of events long past Is it possible, I ask, that a person, however virtuous he or she may be, would be invested with divinity even at the very moment of death? In my opinion, which I think will be shared by many, the story of the person should have remained in the memory of the people for a long time before any halo of

<sup>3</sup> The poet merely says he died upon the throne where he was seated at the time

divinity could gather round it <sup>4</sup> It passes one's comprehension to imagine that people should have set about erecting a temple for a heroine at or soon after the time of her death

'I ask further how long it would have taken for her fame not only to spread but to strike such deep root in other countries as to cause her image to be enshrined in costly temples In this connection I would request the reader to bear in mind that she was neither a royal personage nor a religious prophetess In all probability, if the story is due to a development of events taken from life, it must have been written long after Kannagi had been deified As such we cannot assume the contemporaneousness of the kings mentioned in these works with the date of their composition.

<sup>4</sup> History does record various instances of canonization of ordinary people in Europe while yet alive. Augustus was deified during life and history knows that there was a temple to him in India on the West Coast where Kannagi had her first shrine Ptolemy II and his sister-wife were given a similar apotheosis during life by their loving, but perhaps superstitiously credulous subjects.

My own view is that the authors, not knowing the time when the kings mentioned by them individually flourished, have treated persons belonging to different ages as contemporaries and thus brought together a Gaṇabāhu, a Nedunjeliyan and a Karikāla as living at the same time. In my articles on the date and times of the last two kings, I have adduced reasons to prove that they must have lived at least a century apart. And I would further point out here that Mr Kana-kasabhai Pillai's identification of *Nūrran-gannan* mentioned in the Śilappadikāyam with Śātakarni is entirely untenable, because there is no warrant for the reading Śātakarni of the name Śātakarni which we find in all inscriptions and coins. Though attempts at translating proper names are not quite uncommon, yet it would seem that in this case *Nūrran-gannan* is not a translation of Satakarni. If the Tamil name was the result of perfect translation, we should have expected Nūrran-gādan instead. No foreigner has ever dealt with proper names in this fashion. We have the mention of Indian kings and geographical

places by Greek and Roman writers and by the Chinese pilgrims who visited India. I may note that none of them has adopted the novel method <sup>5</sup>. And again it is a wonder that a similar attempt at translation was not made in the case of the other name Gajabāhu into Yānaikkai <sup>6</sup>. I would further state that if you examine carefully the contents of Manimēkhalai, you find mentioned in this work, assigned to the second century A D, systems of belief and philosophy that could not have struck root till the eighth and ninth centuries.

'The Hon Dewan Bahadur L D Swamikannu Pillai very kindly furnishes the following note on the question of the date of Śilappadikāram and Chintāmani —

"As regards the date of composition of Śilappadikāram I have found that the details given by Adiyārkunallār in நாடுராணகாதை and the prophecy about "ஆடித்திறுகள ஆரிருளபககத்தி-

<sup>5</sup> Is this true? What does Phrūrion stand for in Ptolemy's Geography of the Coromandel Coast?

<sup>6</sup> What about ஒவீய சேனன (Oviasūna) for Cuītrāsena in this very author?

அழலசோ குட்டத தட்டி ஞானற-வெளளிவாரத  
த," etc , are satisfied in only one year between  
A D 1 and A D 1300, i.e. , A D 756 Similarly  
I have quite recently found that the details  
given in Jivakachintamani in காதருவதத்ததை-  
யாரிலம்பகம் (text regarding the Muhūrtam for  
construction of கானககிடங்கு and commentary  
by Nachchinākinīyār on the 1st verse) are  
correct for only one year, A D 813

"In either case the actual composition of  
the poems may have followed the respective  
dates by 60 to 80 years, the ordinary period  
for which Panchāngams are preserved<sup>7</sup> My  
view is that the poets could have obtained the  
details only from a contemporary Panchānga,  
if indeed they did not find the details in the  
materials used by them for the poems In the  
case of Jivakachintāmani there were materials  
on hand

"The interval between this composition of  
சிலப்பதிகாரம் and சீவகசிந்தாமணி was only about  
60 or 70 years or at most about 150 years, not  
700 years as supposed by Kanakasabhai Pillai  
and others "

<sup>7</sup> If a Panchangam was used for the purpose

'We can safely accept Mr Swamīkannu Pillai's date, A D. 756,<sup>8</sup> for Śīlappadikāram. Still, we cannot but maintain that the matter contained in this and other works of a similar nature is useless for purposes of history. If we are asked to explain further why we adopt the accounts furnished in Puranānūru and Pattuppāṭṭu as come down to us from the hand of Perundēvanār,—an author who cannot be said to have lived earlier than the date (A D 756) assigned to Śīlappadikāram—we would say that Perundēvanār stands in the high position of an editor of some older and trustworthy *historical documents of great merit*,<sup>9</sup> while the authors of Śīlappadikāram and other similar works appear before us as mere story tellers and that their compositions are full of improbabilities, impossibilities and inconsistencies'. *The italics are ours*

The first point in the extracts to call for a word by way of remark is that the twin-epic,

<sup>8</sup> This is not his date. His date is 60 or 70 years later, according to him.

<sup>9</sup> How are these historical? Were they written to hand down history?

Śilappadhikāram and Manimēkhalai, is not to be used for purposes of history. He sets forth the reasons very elaborately thus

(1) He ascribes to the authors of the books an ignorance of contemporary rulers, and sees in the combination of a Gajabāhu, a Nedumśeliyan and a Kaikāla a confusion of chronology

(2) He further refers to Mr Kanakasabhai's identification of Śātakarni with "Nūrrangannan" as unwarranted

(3) He next sets down that the work Manimēkhalai contains reference to systems of belief and philosophy that could not have struck root till the 8th and the 9th centuries

(4) And lastly he quotes Mr. Swamikannu Pillai, with approval, to point out that the Śilappadhikāram could have been composed only in A D 756, slightly overstating his authority

In regard to the first point it may be stated at once that there is no immutable psychological law that prevents contemporaries from believing in the supernatural. In



discussing the mental attitude of people separated many centuries from us it is a natural error to import our ideas into their lives. The first essential to a study of this kind is an attitude of mind that can detach itself from its present outlook and carry itself back to another environment. If we are inclined to regard the story of Kannaki as "improbable, impossible and inconsistent" it does not necessarily follow that our ancestors, perhaps 13 or 14 hundred years ago, on Mr Subramaniya Ayyar's own showing, had the same mental outlook as we have. Even so we cannot say of us to-day that there are not among us people who will not believe stories similar to those of the Śilappadhikāram in contemporary life, and it is hardly fair in any one to ascribe to those with whom he does not agree that they make use of the works under consideration in the manner suggested by this remark. Nor does it make it necessary that the author should have lived centuries after the occurrence to share this belief. Granting for argument that he did not share the belief himself, but took up a story that was

current and dealt with it in the manner that he has done, but laying the scene in the contemporary Tamil India of his time, the author would still be within the bounds fixed by literary criticism to a poet. All that is claimed for the two books is that the background of the story is historical, and those that have used it so have more to support them than their critics. We shall consider the contemporaneity of the rulers mentioned in the work later.

In regard to the next point it is not clear where the expression Nūrrangannan comes from. Mr Kanakasabhai has attempted to identify the Śātakarṇi of the Śīlappadhikāram with the expression Nūruvar Kannar or merely Kannai, but of "Nūrrangannan" I am unable to see any reference either in Mr Kanakasabhai's book or in the Śīlappadhikāram. It may be stated, however, that Mr Kanakasabhai's identification is hardly tenable on altogether other grounds. We do not agree with Mr Subramaniya Ayyar that if one name happens to be translated for some reason (*e g.*, Oviasenan [ஒவியசேனன] for Chitrasena) though we may

not know it, it does not follow that others should be

In respect of the third point of his, one would wish to know the grounds upon which a general statement like that is put forward. What are the systems in *Manimēkhalai* that could not have come in before the 8th or the 9th century and why? Where do these systems go back for authority and in what form is it that the systems are found exhibited in the *Manimēkhalai*? These points ought to be cleared before a general statement like that will be accepted.

In regard to the last point, the astronomical data that Mr. Swamikannu Pillai relies on are found in the work but imperfectly expressed. They are elaborated by the commentator who lived many centuries later than the author. It is more than doubtful if the author took up a *panchāṅgam* to set down the date or to note its details. It strikes me that he noted a particularly inauspicious combination for a day, such as the popular கேட்டை, முட்டை, செவ்வாய்க்கிழமை, portending a coming storm of a violently destructive character. There is

nothing to warrant that anything more was meant in the astriological details than this. Whether that is sufficient to override all other considerations in ascribing particular dates to works seems to me exceedingly doubtful.

Going to the more constructive part of Mr. Subramaniya Ayyar's work we are face to face with four inscriptions, namely

- (1) The Madras Museum plates of  
Jatilavaman,
- (2) The smaller Śinnamanūr plates
- (3) The larger Śinnamanūr plates
- (4) The Vēlvikudī grant

His whole system depends upon a series of identifications of the various persons referred to in these four grants. We should invite attention particularly to the identification of No. 2 in the genealogical table constructed from the larger Śinnamanūr plates. This person's name occurs merely as Jatila, the equivalent of the Tamil Sadaiyan, with no other detail to lead us to an identification. Mr. Ayyar has identified him with a Jatila whose name is found in the Ānaimalai inscriptions which are dated 770 A. D. This person

is again equated with the last name in the Vēlvikudī grant which is itself undated, thus giving to this last person, the donor of the grant, the date A D 770 What is more, a minister, by name Mārānkāṇi, whose name figures in the Ānamalai inscriptions, is described, in the Sanscrit portion as mudurakavi, madurataṇa and sāstravid, and as a native of Kalavandapuram This minister Mr Subramaniya Ayyar takes to be definitely the Viṣṇava Ālvāṇi, Madurakavi, neglecting the caution with which the possibility of identification is advanced by both the late Mr Venkayya<sup>10</sup> and Mr. G Venkoba Rao the publisher of the Ānamalai inscriptions On this identification rests the whole chronology of Mr Subramaniya Ayyar's thesis These identifications and the various grants have reference only to the Pāndyas The identification of Mārān-kāṇi with Madurakavi seems almost impossible If the tradition regarding Madurakavi is accepted for one thing, it ought to be accepted for other things equally essential Madurakavi is by common tradition a Brahman and a native of

<sup>10</sup> See Epigraphist's Reports for 1907 and 1908

Kōlū, and is not handed down, in Vaishnava tradition at any rate, as an official of the importance that Māian-kāri was. There is nothing in the ten stanzas ascribed to Mādura-kavi to indicate that he was anything more than a pious devotee. On such a basis of identification and combination of the four records Mr Subramaniya Ayyar constructs a genealogical table beginning with Palyāga-sālai Mudukudumi Peruvaludi <sup>11</sup> and ending with Rājasimha, taken to be a contemporary of the Chola Parāntaka I A D 907 to 956, on the ground that the latter's inscriptions state that he won a victory over a Pāndya by name Rājasimha, which name unfortunately occurs twice in the larger Śiunananūr plates themselves, with three generations between them. It will be clear from this how valueless would be the inferences based upon these grants which on Mr Subramaniya Ayyar's own showing were composed in the 8th, 9th and 10th centuries, in regard to matters relating.

<sup>11</sup> Whose name, by the way, is brought into this grant to justify the name Velvikudi and establish a prior gift of the village without any organic connection. For further details see Ch vi-ii following.

to even two or three centuries earlier at the very worst.

Immediately after the first name Palyāgaśūlai Pāndyan, the Vēlvikudī giant mentions a Kalabbha Inter-iegnum. This Kalabhra Inter-iegnum is taken to be an Inter-regnum brought on by a Karnātaka invasion, referred to in connection with the story of Mūrtināyanār in the Periyapurānam. Fixing up then a Pāndya succession he proceeds next to enumerate 13 Pāndya Kings whose names occur in Tamil literature, and tries to identify the later ten with those mentioned in the grants, and ascribes to them dates ranging from the commencement of the 6th century A. D. to A. D. 650 which he makes the terminal date for Śliyam Śēndan whom he identifies with the Nedum Śeliyan, the victor of Talaiyālangānam. This makes the whole course of identification simplicity itself. But there is however one grave difficulty in accepting this arrangement. The whole body of works called Śāngam works which have to do with these various Pāndyas have not the slightest reference to the Pallavas. Still 500

to 650, at any rate the latter half of it, was the age of the great Pallavas and 650 would take us perhaps to the middle period of one of the greatest among the great Pallavas, Narasimha I, destroyer of Vātāpi, the burning of which is referred to in the Periyaputānam. Sambandar refers to the Pallava general who destroyed Vātāpi. It is very strange that the large body of poets that went about from court to court singing the praises of patrons, and received rewards from them have no reference to make of the Pallavas although several towns and forts and territories under Pallavarule come in largely for reference. This objection seems vital to this chronology arrangement, and seems thoroughly to exemplify the defects of specialistic research of which Mr Stanley A Cook has the following remarks to make, in his "Study of Religions"

"The man who is specialistic in a single department may be a bar to progress because he is apt to overlook the importance of other special studies. His own convictions are the more intense when he associates them with his trained knowledge, and although he may



realize that his own energy has brought him to this stage, and although he may recognize in some special field the need for other men of diverse types and tendencies, he may forget that it takes all kinds of people to make a world. The desire to promulgate and proselytize is characteristic of all men with strong convictions based on experience and knowledge, and they can be intolerant of others. *In research, social reform and religion, there is a stage of development, born of an intense feeling of the completest equilibrium or harmony in one's world of thought that can manifest itself in impatience towards, or in a provoking superiority over, those who differ.* Yet one must not deny to others that sense of harmony that has been gained by one's own efforts along one's own lines, and since the whole world of thought could be theoretically divided into numerous departments, the ideal in view is a harmonious adjustment of them all.

Passing on now to Pandit Ragava Ayyangar's work, called *Śēran Śenguttuvan*, in Tamil, we find him devote Chapter XIII of

the book to the determination of the age in which Śenguttuvan and his contemporaries flourished. Passing in rapid review the late M<sup>r</sup> Kanakasabhai's conclusion in regard to the matter, he lays down his main position somewhat as follows —

It is well known that among the poets that constituted the Śangam, Kapilai, Paranaḷ, Nakkiar, Māmūlanār and Śāttanāi took a prominent place. Among these Māmūlanār appears, from certain poems included in the Ahanānūḷu, to have been contemporary with Chola Karikāla, Śeralādan, Kalvai Kōmān Pulli, from this source also appears clearly that he was one who had travelled much in the various parts of the Tamil country and in countries north of it. This poet is taken to be contemporary with Śenguttuvan Śēra, as he refers, in Aham 251, to a war between the Mauryas and a chief of Mohūr<sup>12</sup> which is taken to stand for the chief Palayan Māran who is said elsewhere to have fought against this Chera. Quoting from Aham 265, <sup>12</sup>

12 'பலபுகழ் நிறைந்த வெலபோர நந்தா-சோமிகு பாடலிக  
குழிஇக கங்கை-நீர்முதற் காரந்த நிதின கொல்கென'

he refers Māmūlanāi to a time subsequent to the destruction of Pātalipura to which he sees a definite reference in the passage quoted. This is the first and in fact the strongest argument of his thesis for ascribing Śenguttuvan to the 5th century A D , but he arrives at this result by a series of arguments which seem to me to find no justification in history. He interprets the expressions in the passage quoted as referring to the destruction of Pātalipura by the Ganges, whereas in actual fact it could mean no more than the disappearance of the great wealth that the Nandas collected in Pātalipura, in the Ganges. This might well have been brought about by the Nandas themselves throwing it into the river, rather than let it fall into the hands of their enemies, in the revolution that subverted their dynasty. Starting from his peculiar interpretation of the passage he postulates the destruction of Pātalipura by the flood of the Ganges, and finds the period of such destruction in the time intervening the visits of the two Chinese travellers to India, namely, Fa Hian in the beginning of

the 5th century and Hiuen Tsang in the second quarter of the 7th century A D He further equates the Mauiyas who had invaded the territory of Palayan Māian, perhaps in a previous generation, with the army of the Gupta King, Samudra Gupta-He finds support for this in the mention of the Mantarāja who is taken to be 'a King of Keiala' and the same as Māndaiam Śēial The rest of his reasoning in the whole Chapter is of the same character and of minor consequence Granting for the sake of argument that his interpretation of the passage quoted above is correct, it would be very difficult to justify Samudra Gupta and his army being referred to as Mauryas by a poet of the standing and reputation of Māmūlanāi There is absolutely nothing in the pillar inscription <sup>13</sup> of Samudra

<sup>13</sup> Kauśāḷaka Māhendra Mahā kāntāraka-Vyāghra-  
raja-Kaurājāka--Mantarāja -Paishtāpuraka -Māhendra-  
giri Kauttūraka Svāmīdatta-Airāṇḍapallaka- Damana-  
Kānobēyaka Viśhnugōp-Āvamuktaka

Nīlarāja- Vaingēyaka—Hastivarman—Pālakkak—  
Ograsēna-- Daivarāshtraka -Kubēra- Kausthalāpuraka--  
Dhānanjayaprabhriti sarva dakṣiṇāpatharāja grahaṇa-  
mōkṣ ānugraha-janita-pratāp ōmīśra mahābh

Gupta to warrant this inference. The text of the inscription contains reference to a Kauralaka Mantarāja. He is mentioned along with Hastivarma of Vengi, Vishnugopa of Kānchi, Ugrasēna of Pālaka etc. There is absolutely nothing in the inscription to lead us to believe that Samudragupta's army passed south of Kānchi. That that Mantarāja should be taken to be Māndaram Śēral is identification of the most unreasonable kind. The editor of the inscription, Dr. Fleet, did not understand what the term Kaurālaka stood for, and merely put forward a suggestion that it might be "Kaurālaka" the equivalent of "of Kerala." This suggestion is in a foot note, but as to the point whether the person referred to was a Kerala prince at all he has offered no definite support. It has since been found that Kaurālaka is very probably a mere mislection for Kaunālaka (of Kunāla) perhaps the region round Kollēr lake<sup>14</sup>. But whatever it is, it is now certain that there is no reference whatsoever to Kerala.

<sup>14</sup> *Epigraphia Indica* Vol. VI, p 3 note by the late Prof Kiebborn

in the inscription As to the destruction of Pātaliputra by flood there is no authority for the statement The recent investigations on the site seem more to indicate a certain amount of destruction by fire very much more than by water, and the passage relied on cannot be held to support the interpretation put upon it After all if one of the poems of Māmūlār makes reference in the past tense to the destruction of Pātali or to an invasion of the south by the Mauyas and a war in consequence between them and one of the Tamil chiefs of Mōhūi (near Madura) this can only mean that Māmūlanāi knew of these occurrences The various passages of Māmūlanāi, most of which are unfortunately in the Aham, will hardly serve to establish his contemporaneity with all the incidents he might have found occasion to mention The identification of Tadiyan with Tidiyan, and of Pidiyan with Palayan borders on the ludicrous There is a further reference to the Jain work Dīgambara Darśana, (ascribed to the 10th century, and to a statement in it as to the establishment of a Drāvida Śāngam in Madura by

Vajjanandi in A. D 470 (Samvat 526) There is nothing to prove that this was a Tamil Śāṅgam for the fostering of Tamil Literature It may well be a Jain Śāṅgam which would, in the sense of being an assembly of Drāvida Jains or Tamil Jains, be a Drāvida Śāṅgam and may have had for its object some matter pertaining to the Jain religion. Thus then the elaborate reasoning exhibited in Chapter XIII of the work seems clearly to rest upon a very uncertain and slender basis It is regrettable that a book which does exhibit considerable labour and puts in an eminently readable form matter buried in recondite works should be marred by this kind of reasoning, particularly in this Chapter and in Chapter VIII <sup>2</sup> where he tries to establish that the Vanji of the Cheras was the Kaimi in the Trichinopoly District where again we come upon a number of distortions of texts and a number of false identifications to establish his thesis

The proper procedure in a case like this is to analyse the various works belonging to this particular group, sort out the various kinds of

## CHRONOLOGY TAMIL LITERATURE 191

historical evidence that we get, establish the undoubted contemporaneity of poets and patrons with a jealously critical eye, and look out for historical connections that will establish one or more synchronisms, and proceed on



it unmistakable that what they have to state in respect of a particular chieftain has reference to contemporary life. The other group, however, does not stand on an altogether similar footing. Poems in this group do make similar references though they are always of an indirect character and do not give such clear evidence of contemporaneity in respect of their various statements. These works are *Purānānūru*, *Ahanāūru*, *Pattuppāttu*, *Padiruppatu*, *Aingurūnuru*, *Nairinai*, *Kuruntokai*, etc.<sup>15</sup> I keep out from this group advisedly the two works *Śilappadhikāyam* and *Manimekhalai* to which I shall return later to see how far the almost contemptuous reference to them of Mr. Subramaniya Ayyar finds jurisdiction. Even so the number of poets and patrons that figure in the works are far too many to be dealt with in one thesis. I shall take 'occasion to

<sup>15</sup> Of these all but the second have been edited in an excellent form, the larger number by the veteran Pandit Saminatha Iyer, but the last two are edited by two others whose labours deserve as much credit as the other's. *Nairinai* was published by the late Mr. Narayanasami Iyer of Kumbhakonam and *Kuruntokai* by Pandit Rangasami Aiyangar of the Madrasa at Vaniambady.

deal with these more elaborately, and on a scale compatible with the degree of lucidity that a lay understanding would demand of necessity. I can do here nothing more than to illustrate the work to be done by one or two typical examples of a telling character. In taking up a question like this a student of research is pretty much in the position of a judge and not of an advocate. Feeling and sentiment are out of the question and the discovery of truth is the object in view. There are here as in the case of a judge the two questions coming up for examination questions of fact, and questions of law. One has to examine facts before stating them as such, one has to examine the method that he adopts in the choice of his facts as much as in their application. Bearing this in mind we have first of all to consider whether stone inscriptions and copper plate grants are better authority for events which could have taken place centuries before the inditing of these documents or literature that was composed ostensibly at the time to which they relate. These Sangam works enumerated above are, by common con-

sent, such works of contemporary value and have therefore to be regarded as of better authority. Mr. Subramania Ayyar takes Perundēvanār as of high standing and authority in respect of these works because he was a cultivated scholar and responsible editor of these, though coming centuries after their composition. But he forgets this, at any rate he seems to, in claiming a similar kind of authority for the compilers of the inscriptions which he seems unmistakably to set over against this class of literature to the disadvantage of the latter. Taking the poet Parāṇar to exemplify this position and collecting together such facts as we could derive from him of an undoubtedly historical character, we can find the political condition of the Tamil land and the position of the Tamil chieftains in relation to one another, in the poet's generation.

In stanza 4 of Puranānūru, Parāṇar refers to a Chola ruler *Ṭiuvapahrērīlanjēṭchenni* in the following terms: they are of the radiant beauty of the rising sun just emerging out of the sea, in his golden car of the fullest effulgence. This king is known from other poems of the

same class, but of other poets, to be the father of Karikāla. The terms in which Paranaḥ chose to describe him in this poem raise the presumption that he was the ruler, Tīgalolināyirreḷparinedumtēr Chola, the grandfather of Śenguttuvan Śera, but this is by the way. Poem 63 of the same collection relates that the chera king, Kudakko Nedum Śēralādan, and the chola king, Vēipahanāḍakkai Peruviraikkili, had fought against each other and fallen on the field of battle. Another poet Kalāttalaiyār has also celebrated the same king, in the same connection. Poems 141 and 142 both refer to Pēhan's liberality which is referred to by the somewhat later Nallūr Nattan, the author of Sirupāṇārruppaḍai. Poems 144 and 145 are addressed to this chief when he had given up his wife in favour of a sweetheart. Paranaḥ, Kapilai, Ariśil Kīlāi and Perungunūi Kīlār interceded in behalf of the wife to good purpose. Such a reference as we get in these two poems is an absolutely unmistakable evidence of contemporaneity<sup>16</sup>. Poem 343 refers to Muzires

<sup>16</sup> Compare Aham 148 at "Kāttūr Tāyangannan

(Muśni or Muyiri) and states, in regard to it, that commodities brought overseas were brought ashore by means of boats. The place was full of goods brought overland and from across the sea to be distributed among those in need, that might go there. Narrinai 6 of the same author has a reference to Ōri 'of the good bow'. In Aham 396, Śenguttuvan is celebrated, while there are references in the poem to the war around Nannan's Pālī hill-fort and to Mignīlī. There is further reference to the story of Ādi Mandī and Āttaṇattī, and possibly to the defeat of Ōri. The poem also appears to be intended to celebrate the imprinting of the bow emblem of the Chera on the Himalayas. Poem 62 of Aham, as also poem 208, refer to the famous Kollippāvai having been erected by the gods. He later also refers to the war with Mignīlī round Pālī hill. It must be noted in this connection that the tradition regarding Kollippāvai is found very clearly recorded in the following poem of Ahanānūru by another author known as Kallāḍanār who refers in the same poem to Pandyan Nedum Śeliyan, victor at Talaiyālangānam. There is similar refe-

rence to another chieftain Pulli, (robber-chieftain, of the Tirupati hills. There is also a statement that Kāṇ, king of Mullūr, killed Ōri and made over his territory round Kollimalais to the Chera King. Poem 270 of Nannai refers to the story that Nannan captured the elephants of his enemy as well as their women folk, binding the elephants with ropes made out of the hair of the women, cut off for the purpose. Poem 73 of Kurundokai has a very interesting reference to a class of wailike people called Kōsar who entered Nannan's territory after killing his state elephant. This wailike tribe of people are referred to in other poems of the same class, and almost in the same terms. One of them referring to their being 'men of united counsel' capable of huling the irresistible "battering-ram". These are, in other poems, associated with Kongu, and are referred to as Kongu Ilangōsar in the Śilappadhikāram. Kurundokai 292 gives in detail the story that Nannan killed a girl for having eaten a fruit that had fallen from one of the trees in his garden into a stream of running water and was hence

carried down by it. He would not accept the ransom offered of 9 times 9 elephants and a golden statue of the girl of her own weight. It must be said to the honour of the Tamils that his name was handed down to posterity branded "as Nannan the woman killer". Aham 147 of the same author states that Āay Eynan, known as the commander-in-chief of the Chera, fought with Mignili and fell in the fight. Poem 152 has reference to Veliyan Tittan and his port known as Perundurai, and what looks a naval defeat of another chieftain Pindan in this place. There are allusions to Pāli hill and Nalli. Aham 165 refers to the Kōśar 'of united counsel,' and seems to refer to their location in Kongu. It also contains the names Annī and Mignili but the passage is too corrupt to know the connection fully. Aham 372 refers to the capture of Tīrukkōvilū, the capital of Kāri by Adiyamān of Tagadūr. That Paravar celebrated this incident is stated in plain terms by Avvaiyār, the poetess, in poem 99 of Puranānūru.

From these references collected in this fashion we could form a more or less definite

picture of the political divisions of the Tamil land in the generation of Paranaḥ. This picture becomes very much more definite and clear, if we could collate it with similar imperfect pictures that we may form by a study of other single authors such as Paranaḥ himself. We shall reserve that for a future occasion. Now taking Paranaḥ alone we find him celebrate the Chola who was father of Karikāla definitely as a contemporary, as also Śēramān Neḍum Śēralādan and the Chola Vērpaharaḍakkai Peruvirarkkili. This chola probably was either the father of Karikāla or his grand-father. We find this Paranaḥ celebrating Śēraṇ Śenguttuvan in the fifth section of the Padirrupattu. We have already made reference to this author's direct reference to Adiyamān, Pēhan, Nannan, Kāḷi and others. These must therefore have come all in one generation, that is, the generation extending from the grand-father of Karikāla to the Chera Śenguttuvan. The period of time ascribed to any one of these chiefs must be a period that would fit in with this political condition of the Tamil land. It has already been pointed



out that this somewhat vague picture of the political condition of the South is capable of being completed by bringing into collation the picture that can be made of it from other authors whose works have come down to us like those of Parānar. Without going elaborately into that comparison I may at once state that the Tamiḷ land was divided among the three kings the Pāṇḍya with his capital at Mādura, the Chera with his capital at Vanji on the west coast, and the Chola with his capital at Urayyūr,<sup>17</sup> at the commencement of this generation. The intervening region and the border land of the north where a good deal of fight would have to be done was divided among a number of chiefs who were very often independent of the kings and sometimes acknowledged allegiance to one or other of them. Of such we find mention in the writings of Parānar himself. The information that we obtain from him is confirmed and supplemented by venerable poets among

<sup>17</sup> 17 Aham 31 வென்றியொடு—விலலைத்துண்ணும் வல  
லாண் வாழ்க்கை—தமிழ் கெழுமாவாகாகும்—மொழி பெயர்  
தேளத்த பனயலை யிறந்தே

whom mention may be made of Māmūlanāi from whom I have to draw for further information later on. It is this latter that makes mention of Pulikat as the Vāduka frontier (northern frontier)<sup>18</sup>. The corresponding frontier on the western side seems to have extended to the north of the Tulu country into which, as was noticed already a new tribe with the name Kōśar effected entry in the days of Nannan<sup>19</sup>. Immediately to the east of them were the territories of the two chiefs Vichchikkōn and Irungōvēl of Araiyam, just below this and along the hill region bordering the western Ghats and the Eastern where they meet the Western was perhaps the chieftain Pāri of Parambunādu. To the east of it was the territory of Adiyamān of Tagadūr (Modern Dharmapuri), to the south east of which was the territory of the chieftain Ōri with his territory round about the Kolli-

<sup>18</sup> Kur 11 குலலைக்கண்ணி வடுகாமுனையது. வலவேற காட்டினனஞ்ஞமபா

<sup>19</sup> Aham 15 மெயமமலி பெருமபூடகோசா. தோகை காவிற றஞகாட்டனன

Kur 73 னனனனறுமா—கொன்று நாட்டிற போசகிய—  
வொன்றுமொழிக கோசாபேவ

malais Across into the South Arcot District, particularly the hilly portions of the west, was the territory of Kāri with his capital Tīrūkōvilūr Behind them, almost in a sort of second line, was the chieftain Pēhan with his territory round the Palnis, Āay round the Podiyil hill in the Madurai and Tinnevely districts, Evvi on the Coromandal coast with his territory embracing a part of the Puḍukkōtta state and the District of Ramnād There is another chief the Tondaimān Ilandirayan who was certainly the contemporary of Arvai and Adiyamūn Anji, though not directly mentioned by Parānar His Capital was at Kanchi and he ruled the territory round Kanchi under Chola suzerainty. We have besides to locate, from the works of Parānar himself, the Kōśar somewhere in the Kongu country This seems the political distribution of the territory belonging properly to the Tamil land in the generation of Parānar the poet Any age therefore that could be ascribed to the Śāngam, in which Parānar did play a prominent part, must exhibit more or less this condition of political distribution of territory in the Tamil country. Any age

which, from what could be known of it, does not visualise this political division has therefore necessarily to be rejected. The question therefore now is whether the latter half of the 6th and the first half of the 7th century, fixed by Mr Subiamaniya Ayyar, or the 5th century to which Mr Ragava Ayyangar assigns the Śāṅgam, fit in with the political circumstances thus shadowed forth from the works of Paṇṇar. The first alternative is very easily disposed of. The period of a century from 560 to 650 was the period when the great Pallavas were prominent political factors in the south, and practically the whole of the Tamil country was under their influence in the northern half. The southern enclave was equally indisputably in the hands of the Pāṇḍyas among whom the most prominent character was the famous Kūṇ Pāṇḍyan or Sundara Pāṇḍya or Nīnraśi Nedumāian. His contemporary of the north was Narasimhavarman I, Pallavamalla. Both of them had for their contemporaries alike the Tēvāram Hymners, Appai and Sambandar. There is no reflection of this political condition

in the literature under examination, nor is there any prominent mention of the Pallavas at all, in the region where they held, sway, about which however, Paranar has a very large number of references to make. While these literary men take the greatest pains always to distinguish one ruler from another of the same dynasty by giving to each the distinguishing epithet, it is not open to us to identify, without sufficient lead from our sources, one ruler with another without very substantial reasons. The identification of Śēndan Seliyan of the copper plates with the Pandyan NeḍumŚeliyan of Talaiyālangānam fame is, to say the least, not proven. In regard to the historical value of the Śilappadhikaram and Manimēkhalai about which a few words must be said here by way of reply to Mr Subramaniya Ayyar's contemptuous reference, which betokens an amount of ignorance which would be inexcusable in one with any pretensions to scholarship Śenguttuvan Śēra figures prominently in both the works. The author of the first is the younger brother of Śenguttuvan. The author of the other is his friend and both of them worked at

a subject, legendary or other, that caught their imagination and dealt with it poetically, laying the scene, however, in the contemporary Tamil India of their time. Now the question is: Are we to accept the statement of this prince-poet when he speaks of his parentage or not, though he might choose to put it, as a poet, in the mouth of one under a spell? Are we not to accept his statement in regard to the achievements of his brother particularly when they happen to be confirmed in every detail by an independent poet Paranar who celebrates him in one section of another work Padirrupattu? Those that have taken it upon themselves to use these poems know their responsibility obviously, and use the material presumably with critical care. It is just possible that there are differences of opinion in respect of a detail here or a detail there as being of a historical character or no. But a wholesale condemnation such as is found in the extract from Mr. Subramaniya Ayyar quoted above, can be but the offspring of blank ignorance and incapacity to appreciate other mental attitudes and situations.

Passing on now to the other period so far ascribed, the Pandit is perhaps on a little more safe ground, but the arguments with which he finds it necessary to buttress this position shows its weakness. I need only mention two points here. (1) The erroneous and impossible identification of Mantarāja of Kurāl with Mandaramśērāl of Kērala which name, by the way, does not find mention to my knowledge in these works. (2) The equation of the Vambunōriyar with the army of invasion under Samudragupta. It has already been pointed out that the interpretation of the quotation regarding the Nandas is wrong altogether, and that it is so is proved by a similar passage in lines 4 and 5 of poem 251 of Aham<sup>20</sup>, but there are a number of references which carry the invasion of Mauryas up to Mōhūr of Palayan Mūran. In one of these passages at any rate, the Pandit tries to establish the contemporaneity of this invasion with the Palayan Mūran, which, from the text, is untenable. The term Mōhūr is used in the

20 அருளுயா கேட்பின்-சந்தன வெறுகதை யெய்தினும்  
மற்றவுட்ககலா வாழிதோழி Compare note 10, S. 89 ante

passage to stand for the chieftain of Mōhūr not necessarily Palayan Māran That reference and the various other references to the Mauryas in Māmūlanār, as well as the reference to their cutting their way through rock in their march southwards, all of them do refer possibly to a great southward invasion<sup>21</sup> of the Mauryas, a newly-established dynasty We know now beyond doubt, since the discovery of the new edict of Asoka at Maski in the Nizam's dominions, that Asoka's territory extended right down to the frontier of Mysore within the boundaries of which other edicts were discovered years ago. We know of no wars excepting the famous Kalinga war that Asoka carried on for purposes of conquest Chandragupta not having had the time to do it, the further conquest of territories not included within his Empire but included within that of his grand-son, historians ascribe to Chandragupta's son Bindusāra, the father of Asoka who himself held the

<sup>21</sup> Abam 69 & 281 *Ḫṛṇṇṇṇ* seems the preferable reading in Puram 175 The blundering of the commentator is worth remarking



vicerealty of the southern frontiers with his capital at Vidiśa (Bilsa) <sup>22</sup> The conquest of the south by the Mauryas must have therefore been made either by Bindusāra the king, or, by the viceroy-prince, his son. The term *Vadukai* used in this connection by the Tamils is a general designation for all northerners, and indicates, in the various references before us, an onward move southwards of certain northern tribes of which we get perhaps the final glimpse in the movements of the Pallavas till they come into occupation of Kanchi and the extension of their power at least as far south as Trichinopoly and Kumbhakonam. All the passages of *Māmūlanār*, referring to these incidents, refer to them as past occurrences and not as contemporary events. This interpretation of the passages relating to northerners agrees very well with the claim of certain Tamil kings to having won victories over the Aryan army, which attribute is specifically given to the

<sup>22</sup> V A Smith's *Early History of India* (3rd edition) p 149. Notice the footnote containing the statement of Tārānātha, the Tibetan historian.

Pāndyan Neḍum Śeliyan whose name figures in the Śilappadhikāram Such a general movement against the north could on general considerations be postulated only of the period of confusion that followed the decline of Maurya power in the north and the rise, to the imperial position afterwards, of the Andhras and the Andhrabhṛityas in succession The fifth century is hardly the century in which we get anything like a glimpse of such a great movement of people With this general position of affairs clearly before us, the Gaḇabāhu synchronism does not appear in the least impossible, but appears on the contrary very highly probable The information that could be gathered from the Ceylon Chronicle Mahāvamśa compiled in its present form in the 6th century, but from material put together in epic form at the commencement of the 4th century, from a written source traceable to the first century B C., is not as unreliable as it is too readily taken to be. If that Buddhist chronicle does not refer to Pattinidēvi in so many plain words we have no right to expect it, but that does not

viceroyalty of the southern frontiers with his capital at Vidiśa (Bilsa) <sup>22</sup> The conquest of the south by the Mauryas must have therefore been made either by Bindusāra the king, or, by the viceroy-prince, his son. The term *Vadukar* used in this connection by the Tamils is a general designation for all northerners, and indicates, in the various references before us, an onward move southwards of certain northern tribes of which we get perhaps the final glimpse in the movements of the Pallavas till they come into occupation of Kanchi and the extension of their power at least as far south as Trichinopoly and Kumbhakonam. All the passages of *Māmūlanār*, referring to these incidents, refer to them as past occurrences and not as contemporary events. This interpretation of the passages relating to northerners agrees very well with the claim of certain Tamil kings to having won victories over the Aryan army, which attribute is specifically given to the

<sup>22</sup> V A Smith's *Early History of India* (3rd edition) p 149. Notice the footnote containing the statement of *Tārānātha*, the Tibetan historian.

Pāṇḍyan Nedum Śeliyan whose name figures in the Śilappadhikāram Such a general movement against the north could on general considerations be postulated only of the period of confusion that followed the decline of Maurya power in the north and the rise, to the imperial position afterwards, of the Andhras and the Andhrabhṛityas in succession The fifth century is hardly the century in which we get anything like a glimpse of such a great movement of people With this general position of affairs clearly before us, the Gaṇabāhu synchronism does not appear in the least impossible, but appears on the contrary very highly probable The information that could be gathered from the Ceylon Chronicle Mahāvamsa compiled in its present form in the 6th century, but from material put together in epic form at the commencement of the 4th century, from a written source traceable to the first century B C, is not as unreliable as it is too readily taken to be. If that Buddhist chronicle does not refer to Pattinidēvi in so many plain words we have no right to expect it, but that does not

invalidate the existence of a Gajabāhu or of his visit to the court of Śenguttuvan Śēra<sup>23</sup> The synchronism thus established must, it seems to me, stand, no satisfactory reason having been put forward so far to invalidate it The newer information only goes so far to confirm it The tradition of Pattini has taken such a hold upon the people of Ceylon that it is quite likely it was introduced under the favourable auspices inferable from the Śilappadhikāram, though naturally the Buddhist chronicle of the Mahāvihāra omits mention of it<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> It must be noted, however, that other chronicles, which may reach back to similar old sources, do mention the incident specifically (Vide Upham's—*Rajaratnācarī* & *Rajāvali*)

<sup>24</sup> *Indian Antiquary*. XLV pp 72-73.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE AGE OF PARANAR

It will be noticed from what has been said in relation to the condition of Indian civilization at the dawn of the Christian Era that the information put together has been drawn from various sources which have been merely indicated in the course of the narration. It would be worthwhile classifying and arranging these sources with a view to investigating what exactly the relative value of each of these sources would be in respect of the particular period to which that general account has reference. Some of these sources have already been explained in sufficient fullness to indicate their value such as the *Dipavamśa* and the *Mahavamśa*, the chronicle accounts of Buddhist Ceylon <sup>1</sup> We have also indicated in the course of the chapters II & III the relative value of the classical writ

<sup>1</sup> Vide chaps. 1 & 2 *ante*

the Sanskrit writers who make any reference to South India have been examined in some detail in chapter I and their value estimated.

Coming down to inscriptions and epigraphical matter generally, it may be said that the material available for work for this period, is so little that we might assume that the epigraphical material other than the legends on coins is perhaps as good as absent, except for the Asoka inscriptions and just a few others in regard to this part of India. There is left then the literary sources, of which both Tamil and Sanskrit, and various Sanskritic languages could be exploited usefully. But for this period even Sanskrit and Sanskritic languages are of comparatively minor importance to classical Tamil literature, and that we shall take into consideration just now.

In order the best to understand the value of this literature and appraise it at its real worth, let us see a little more closely what exactly we can find in relation to the particular authors or particular generations of authors, and having projected from such information as is available, a picture from these sources alone,

we might then so far compare that with what may be available, to check the accuracy of it, from the other external sources to establish the correctness of the picture already drawn of South India at the beginning of the Christian Era. To do this, we shall take a poet known to readers of classical Tamil as Parānar

Parānar was one of those traditional literary men who constituted the third academy of Madura. His name is of peculiar importance in Tamil literature as it connects itself with the names of certain well-known celebrities in that literature, and in consequence we could gather round his name certain well-known figures. Moreover, he seems to have been a long lived man and his generation takes in a pretty long series of rulers and poets. By studying him we can gain something like a full idea of what the south India of his days was. Parānar is regarded traditionally as a Brahman. His writings occur in a large number of the Tamil classics known collectively as Śāṅgam literature. He is a poet who sang of the Chera Śenguttuvan, whose name is connected at once with the Śāṅgam classics on the one side,



and with the twin-epic Śilappadikāram-Manimēkalai which, it has recently been contended should be regarded as something quite apart from the former, and separated from them by a comparatively wide interval of time. It will be clear even to the lay reader if Parana sang of Śenguttuvan, as he does in the fifth book of the Padirruppattu, and if Śenguttuvan's younger brother was the author of the Śilappadikāram, and his friend, Śāttan the author of the Manimēkalai, then the age of all of these must be one and the same whatever that age might be. Of Parana's works we have twelve short pieces in the collection Narrinai, fifteen poems in the Kuuntogai, one ten of the ten-tens (Padirruppattu), thirty-two poems in the collection Abānanūru and twelve in the Purānanūru, with one in the collection called Tiruvalluvamālai. And such a number would be considered voluminous work, and have a comparatively wide range in respect both of matter and manner. In Puram 4,<sup>2</sup> he

2 பொலந் தோமிசைப் பொலிவு தோன்றி

மாககட னிவந் தெழுதருளு

செஞ்ஞாயிறற்க கவினைமாதே

யனையை யாகனமாதே

Parana, Puram 4

celebrates a Chola Uruvapahrēr Nanjēṭchenni whose somewhat queer name seems to be derived from a comparison which this poet has instituted to him in the poem, under reference, where he is likened to the morning sun who in radiant majesty rises out of the sea in the glorious red of dawn. This Chola we know from the poem *Porunarārruppadai* of *Mudattāmakanniṃyār*,<sup>3</sup> was the father of the great Chola *Karikāla*. He celebrates in *Pūram* 63 the Chera (*Kudakko Nedumśēralādan* <sup>4</sup>, and the Chola (*Peruvirarkkili*) when both had fought and fallen on the field of battle. This same event is celebrated by another poet who goes by the name *Kalāttalaiyar* <sup>5</sup>. One of the so called last seven patrons by name *Pēhan* whose territory was round the Palnis was celebrated by this poet. One of the references to him is in regard to his large beneficence without expectation of a reward <sup>6</sup>. One supreme instance of such being his

<sup>3</sup> உருவபஹீதேரினே யோனசிறுவன

<sup>4</sup> Note at foot of the poem *Pūram* 62.

<sup>5</sup> *Pūram* 141 & 142

<sup>6</sup> *Pūram* 144 & 145

providing a wild peacock with a cloak or mantle as a protection against cold. The second which is more to our point is his intercession in behalf of Pēhan's wife Kannaki (not the heroine of the Śilappadikāram) whom he had abandoned in favour of a courtesan. Parānar persuaded him to walk in the path of rectitude by returning to his wife. On this same occasion in the same sad connection three other poets intervened in behalf of the abandoned wife. Their names are Kapilar, Ariśil Kīlār, and Perungunrūr Kīlār, authors respectively of the seventh, eighth, and ninth 'tens' of the 'ten-tens' collection. In Puram 369 there is reference according to the Colophon to the Śēramān Kadalōttiya Vēl Kelu Kuttuvan (Kuttavan Chera, who drove his enemies with his javelin on the sea) who must be regarded as identical with Śenguttuvan of the Śilappadikāram, as Parānar refers to this latter in almost identical terms in poem 46 of the Paḍirrupattu.<sup>7</sup> In Narrinai six, he refers

<sup>7</sup> பல செருகடந்தகொல களிற்றியானை  
கோடுநல் பெளவங்கலங்கவேலிட

to the chieftain Ōri of the Kollimalais, and in stanza 201 of the same work he has reference to the famous statue of the goddess Kolli-pāvai. This poet also describes in some detail various transactions in connection with the chief Nannan of Konkan (Konkānam). Chief among this was the war that the Chera undertook against him. In the course of this war or in another, the Chera general called Āay Eyyinan, the commander-in-chief of the Chera fell in battle against Nannan's commander-in-chief Gnumilī.<sup>8</sup> He also refers to the accumulation of the vast wealth of Nannan in the citadel Pālī. One poem in Kuruntogai (292) gives in detail the story of Nannan's putting to death the girl that ate the fruit of Nannan's garden carried down stream in a canal through the

கடைதிரைப்பரப்பிற்படு கடலோடடிய

வெல புதழகுடவென

II 11 to 13

8 அடுபோர ஞிமிலி செறுருவலகடைஇ

வணமை யெயினன வீழநதன்ன ஞாயிறு Aham 180.

கடுமபரிசுருதிரையா அயெயினன

நெடுநதோ ஞிமிலியோடு பொருதுகளம் படடென்

Aham 147

garden <sup>9</sup> The savagery of this chieftain is again brought under reference in Narrinai 270, where he is described as having shorn his enemies' women folk of their hair to make ropes of them for fastening captured elephants. Reference has already been made to Paranar's stating that a tribe of people, the Kośar, entered Nannan's territory after killing his state elephant. There are a number of allusions to several incidents in the life of Nannan. Another reference that must be noted here, as of some importance, is to the entry of the Kośar into Kongu in Abam 195 <sup>10</sup>

Returning now to the fifth-ten of the Padirrupattu, where he celebrates Śenguttuvan Chera, we find Śenguttuvan Chera described in the Padikam (epilogue) as the son of Nedumśeralādan "King of the westerners" by Manakkilli

9 மண்ணிய சென்ற வொண்ணுதலரிவை  
புன்றருபசங்காய தினறதன்றபபற  
கொன்பதிற ஁ருன்பதுகவிற தோடவணிறை  
பொன் செய பாவை கொடுபபவுங்கொள்ளான்  
பெண் கொலை புரிந்தநன்னன் போல

Kuruntogai 292.

10 ஒன்று மொழிக கோசாககொன்று முரண்போகிய  
கடுந்தோத திதியன் முநதைக கொங்குழை

a Chola Princess <sup>11</sup> He is said first of all to have marched across forests up to the Ganges, defeating his enemies on the way for the purpose of a stone to make the statue of Pattini (the deified heroine Kannaki) He is also said to have returned from the expedition bringing in a vast number of heads of cattle belonging to his enemies The next achievement of his is the utter defeat of his enemies at Viyalūr and the destruction of the place Getting across to the other shore, he destroyed the fortifications of Koḍuhūr He marched further into the territory of Palayan and having cut down his margosa tree (perhaps another totem) captured a number of his elephants and yoked them together by ropes made of the hair of the women folk of the enemies His next exploit is the defeat and destruction of a number of Chola princes, collateral cousins of the reigning ruler, who carried on constant war for the time being outside Vāyil (Nērivāyil of other works) And last of all is the destruction of his enemies on the sea, which was already referred to in

<sup>11</sup> She is called Narchōṇai in the Śilappadikāram

connection with Puram 369. Of the various incidents found in this padikam (the epilogue of the poem) some of them are described in detail in the body of the poem itself. His northern invasion is described in general terms in lines 6 to 11 of poem 43 of the Padirruppattu <sup>12</sup>. His invasion against the territory of Palayan and his allies, and what he is said to have done there in the course of this war are described in some fullness of detail in lines 10 to 17 of poem 44 <sup>13</sup>. There is a reference to his wearing 'the garland of seven crowns' in line 6 of poem 45 <sup>14</sup>. In poem 46, lines 11 to 14, there is a clear reference to his fight on the sea and the destruction of the protection that the sea offered to his enemies obviously the pirates

12 கடவுணிலை இயகலலோசுரு நெடுவரை  
வடதிசை யெலலை யீமயமாகத்  
தென்னங் குமரியொடா யீடையரசா  
முரசுடைப் பெருஞ்சுமந்த தையவாரப்பெழச்  
சொலபல நாட்டைத் தொலகவி னழித்தப்  
போரடுதானைப் பொலந்தாரா குடுவ

13 மோகூ மன்னன முரசுகொண்டு  
நெடுமொழி பணிந்தவன் வேம்பு முதறடிந்தது  
முரசு செய்முரசுகிக களிறுபல ஞிடடி &c

14 எழுமுடி மார்பின எயதிய சேரல

who found their shelter in the sea<sup>15</sup> In line 4 of stanza 48, he is described figuratively as a veritable fisherman<sup>16</sup>, who constantly engaged himself on the sea to get rid of his enemies with a view to making the articles coming over sea, available to those inside his own territory In poem 49 lines 7 to 10 and in lines 16 to 17, there is a reference again to the determined stand made by Palayan against this Chera and his final destruction<sup>17</sup> The last of all in poem 50, line 7, there is an obvious reference to the junction of the three rivers Kauvery, Āmrāvātī, and Kudavannār<sup>18</sup> This

கொல களிற்றியானைக

15 கோடுநரல பெவுவன கலங்கவேலிட

டு டைதிரைப பரப்பிற படுகட லோட்டிய

வேலபுகழ் குடுவன

16

நீர் புகருக

கடலொழுகுநத பனிததுறைப பாதவ

17 வெல போரவேந்தரும் வேளிரு மொன்று மொழிந்த

மொயவளஞ் செறுகதி மொசினது வருமோ கூர்

வலம்படுகுழு நிலையதிர மண்டி

கருஞ்சினைவிறல வேம்பறுதத

பெருஞ்சினை குடுவற கண்டனம்

18 காவிரியன நியுமஞ்சிவிரி புனலொரு

மூன்றுடன் கூடிய கூடல



last reference, I bring in here, as recently a great deal has been made of it to show that the capital of the Chera was Karoor on the Āmrāvati (Ān Porunai or Porundam) As against this there is in this very poem itself a number of references to the perennial flow of water in his Periyār, which in one place at any rate is described as having its source in his territory and emptying itself into the sea in his own territory (L 13 to 18 of poem 48) <sup>19</sup> Reference also might be made to line 15 of poem 43 <sup>20</sup>. The meaning of the reference to the three streams is obvious if one remembers that his uncle is said to have conquered the country of Kongu in line 15 to 16 of poem 22 of this collection <sup>21</sup>

Of these achievements, the Śilappadikāram describes elaborately his northern invasion,

19 நின்மலைப் பிறந்தது நின்கடல் மண்டு

மலிபுனல் நிகழ்தருந் தீனீர் விழுவீற

பொழிலவநி வேனீற பேரெழில வாழககை &c

20 அருவியற்ற பெருவற்ற காலையும்

மருஞ்செலன் பேராற நிருங்கரை யுடைத்து &c

21 மாகெழுக்கொங்கா நாடகப்படுத்த

வேல்கெழுதானை வெருவரு தோன்றல

and makes clear reference to his having undertaken it for the purpose of bringing the stone and of the various details as to his victories against the northern enemies, but how far the invasions were true is not exactly to our purpose at present. It is, however, a pity that there is not a reference to this pattini in those words in the body of the work apart from the epilogue. What is called a padikam or pāyiram in Tamil, an epilogue and a prologue respectively, is not to be added at any time and by everybody that chooses. It is generally of the nature of a preface, or a foreward, or a recommendation made by one more or less directly or intimately connected with the author. The only remote man who can do this is a commentator, but I believe not generally one who is separated very remotely from the author. In any case, the presumption of the statement being untrue would be unwarranted when we find all the other statements made in this piece are confirmed by reference to the body of the work. Even in respect of this particular it cannot be said that there is no reference as it is possible to read it

in lines 6 to 11 of poem 43<sup>22</sup> The others of them are repeated almost in the same words in at least two places in the Śilappadikāram by the author, who is no other than the younger brother of this Chera ruler himself

There are however, in respect of these achievements two matters which call for special remark His father claims victory over Kaḍambu of the sea in lines 13 and 14, of poem 11<sup>23</sup> There is reference to the same incident in line 3 of poem 12<sup>24</sup>, in lines 4 & 5 of poem 17<sup>25</sup>, and in lines 2 to 4 of poem 20<sup>26</sup>.

22 கடவுணிலைய கலலோங்கு நெடுவரை  
வடநிசை யெலிலையமயமாசத  
தென்னகருமரியொடாயிடையாசா  
முரசுடைப்பெருஞ்சுமந்ததையவாபபெழசு  
சொலபலநாட்டைத் தொலகலனழித்த  
போரடுதானைப் பொலந்தராகுடவ

23 பலா மோசிறதோம்பிய திரளபுககடம்பின  
கடியுடை முழுமுதறுமியவேளய

24 கடம்பு முத்தறநத கடுஞ்சினவேந்தே,

25 துளங்குபிசிருடைய மாசுக்கடன்ககிக  
கடம்பறுத்தியற்றிய வலம்படுவியன்பனை யாடுகா.

26 எங்கோ

வீருமுன்னிததுருத்தி யுண  
முரணியோத்தலைச சென்று  
கடம்புமுத்தறநத கடுஞ்சினமுனபி  
னெடுஞ்சோலாதன வாழ்கவவனகண்ணி

The last of these refers distinctly to an island of his enemies which may be of the nature of a delta. He is also credited with having imprinted his bow emblem on the Himalayas after having subdued the Āryas of the north. But, strangely enough he is also given credit in the padikam at the end of the second-ten of his having taken prisoners some Greeks (Yavanas), bound their hands behind their back as prisoners, and pouring ghee on their heads and taking what seems to be meant for heavy ransom for setting them free. It is the first achievement of his, which in another place the poet describes as giving him the primacy among rulers between the Himalayas and Cape Comorin, that gave him the name 'Imayavaiamban' Nedumśēralādan, the former word meaning he that had the Himalayas for his boundary. This expression, like a few others of the kind unfortunately, has been corrupted by the late Mr Kanakasabhai Pillai into 'Imayavarman' for which there is absolutely no authority in the texts concerned. These incidents of the father are of some importance as the titles derived from these

are applied to the son. The third ten of this work has reference to a younger brother of Imayavaramban, and therefore the uncle of Śenguttuvan. He is given credit for having overthrown the fort of Ayirai (poem 21 line 29)<sup>27</sup>, he is given credit for having brought the Kongu Nāḍu under his control in lines 15-22 of poem 23. Line 26<sup>28</sup> of the same poem gives him credit for having destroyed a hill fort somewhere. In lines 10 and 11 of poem 28<sup>29</sup> there is again a clear reference to the Periyār being the river of these Cheras. But of course the Periyār may be referred to generally as the great river, but in interpreting this, one ought not to forget the statement that he it was that brought the Kongu under his control and therefore the river of the Chera should be interpreted as having reference to a river in the Chera country proper and not in a later acquisition. It is this conquest of the Chera that has given him credit

27 நேருயா நெடுவரையயிரைப் பொருந்

28 தண்ணலம் பெருங்கோட்டகப்பா வெறிநத்.

29 பெருவற்ற காலையு

நிவந்து கரையிழிதரு நன்னதலைப் பேரியாற்றற்சு

சீருடைவியன்புலம் வாய்பரந்து யிகே இய

for having bathed in both the seas in one and the same day<sup>30</sup>, which is only perhaps a somewhat exaggerated way of stating that in his time his territory touched both the eastern and western seas. So then we see that Śenguttuvan who succeeded probably both his father and uncle became the hen to territory right across the whole of south India from the west coast in Cochin to somewhere across to the east coast through Kongu. Whatever the justification or otherwise, both the father Nedumśēial and the son Śenguttuvan lay claim to 'the garland of seven crowns', which could mean no more than what the Mummudi of the later times did mean, the three crowns and the seven crowns respectively, signifying the rulership of the three kingdoms and perhaps the seven kingdoms. This seven is not a mystic number. There seem to have been seven principal chieftains among whom the territory in south India was divided at the time, as we shall notice in another connection

30 கருங்கனிற்றியானைபுணர் நிரை நீட்டி

யிருகடனீரு மொருபகலாடி.

Paḍigam to third ten of the Ten Tens

In this particular connection the historical character of these poems, cannot be called into question even by those who had the greatest objections to find historical matter in the twin-epic Śīlappadikāiam - Manimēkalai. But as against them this must be said that the authors of the twin-epic were one of them a brother, and the other a friend of Śenguttuvan and what either of them has to say in the historical passages of the poem, which are easily distinguishable from the rest, find confirmation detail for detail in these poems which are very much more historical. All honest scepticisms therefore must accept as historical such personal touches as one finds even in romances. The real difficulty is the necessary critical faculty to distinguish what is historical in an unhistorical work. Śenguttuvan Śera's father and uncle, therefore, were historical personages in whose reigns the western sea littoral of India was infested by pirates<sup>31</sup>,

<sup>31</sup> This view of the term Kaḍambu in the poems finds strong confirmation in the City of Nannan having been known 'Kaḍambin peruvāyil' (vide Paḍigam in the fourth-

and both the father and the son exerted themselves untiringly to put an end to this piracy on their coast. That they did it with great success is in evidence in the various Tamil poems which describe the flourishing and very highly valuable trade of the ports of the west coast. Such a state of things both in regard to the piracy of the coast, and to its absence at a particular period, are in the clearest terms detailed in regard to Roman trade in the work of the classical geographers. It has already been pointed out that Pliny complains of this piracy, perhaps soon after Pliny got his information, the careful author of the *Periplus* makes mention of it, in the region opposite his Chersonesus.

ten poem 40 ll 13—15) <sup>1</sup>, and the Kaṭambar being one among four Kudies (cultivators) in Puram. 335 ll 7 and 8 <sup>2</sup>

Kāppiyarūkkāppiyār on Kalangāykkannu nārmu-  
dichohēral.

- 1 பூழிநாடடைப படையெடுத்த தழீஇ  
யுருள பூங்கடம்பின் பெருவாயினன்னனை  
நிலைச செழவினாறநிலை யறுத்தவன

- 2 துடிபுன பாணன பறையன கடம்பனென  
நின்னான கலலது குடியுமில்லை



He then proceeds to mention what he calls the White Island before coming down to Naura and Tyndis, the first markets of Damirica. The Chersonesus in the Periplus seems undoubtedly to refer to the tongue of land which makes a small peninsula at the mouth of the Kali Nadi as it is called in North Canara. Opposite to this is the cluster of islands called the 'Oyster Rocks' perhaps the *Caenitae* of the Periplus. White Island is the *Lieuke* of the geographers and is the same as the vernacular *Velliyan Kallu* or *Tūvakkal*, either of which is an exact translation of *Lieuke* or *White Island*. This is identified with *Pigeon Island* in the new *Imperial Gazetteer*<sup>32</sup>. Then we come to the first ports of Damirica (Tamil country) and they are given as Naura and Tyndis corresponding to Nitras and Tyndis of Ptolemy. Ptolemy describes Nitras as a mart in the country, which he describes as *Ariaka Andron Peiraton*, that is the *Ariaka* of the pirates. It is of this Nitras that Pliny remarks that "ships frequenting the great emporium of Mouziris ran the risk of being

attacked by pirates, who infested the neighbourhood and possessed a place called Nitras. Thus Nitras figures both as a mart and as an island off the coast. This could only mean that the island was on the line of entry to the port of Nitras wherever that was. Nitras or Naura of Pliny is identified by Mr Schoff with Cannanore which appears too far south. Cannanore, as has been already pointed out, is the Mont d'Ely of the mediæval geographers. Yule's guess that Nitras refers to Mangalore turns out correct. Mangalore is situated at the head of a delta formed by two rivers Nētravati and Gurupa. 'It is the Nitravati that has given the name Nitrias or Nitron or perhaps even Naura to the city. That may also have been the cause of the name of the island Nitron set over against the port. Tyndis is much farther south and has been identified with Kadalundi, not far from where Beypore is at present. Thus then we find the pirate coast of the Periplus to have been between Kaiwar point at the southern extremity of North Canara and the port of Mangalore. That answers exactly to the

description that we get in early Tamil literature of the Kadark-Kadambu (the Kadamba pirates)' having been found in the sea and having to be constantly defeated by war across the sea to their island-rendezvous by both the Chera Śenguttuvan and his father. That would explain why Ptolemy has got absolutely nothing more to say of these pirates than the mere characterization of the coast as the pirate coast. The Kadambas must have been a pirate race to begin with till they were re-claimed to civilization somewhat later perhaps. This conclusion is certainly in keeping with the position of the savage Nannan, the women-killer, whose capital is described, as already remarked, as Kadambin Peruvāyil, that is the large and the wide gate of the Kadamba country. He was after constant war put to death by another Chera celebrity Kalangāykkanni Nārmudi-ch-Chēral, the hero of the fourth 'ten' of the 'ten-tens'. Thus then it is clear that these poems of classical Tamil taken along with what is available in the Classical geographers makes it clear that the first Cheras known to history

distinguished themselves in the southern opposition set up to the Aryan incursions from the north, and made conquests in south India so as to extend their territory from coast to coast across the peninsula. Their particular service however to civilization consisted in their suppression of this pest of piracy on the west coast which both the first Chera known to us and his son took so much pains to suppress, while other Cheras perhaps subordinate chieftains did make substantial contribution towards achieving this object. The period when this littoral was free from pirates extended approximately from A D 80 to A D 222, the date of Peutingerian Tables.

A study of the poems of Paranar with such of the available collateral material both literary and other leads to this knowledge which is found confirmed by two collateral lines of evidence extraneous to this literature namely the information available from the classical geographers, and the results that could be drawn from the various finds of Roman coins along the coast of this part of the country, and these results might be set down as follows —

Paranar has reference principally only to the Chola kings and the Chera kings. He does not appear to have celebrated the Pāṇḍya rulers very much. He has at any rate something to say of various chieftains who figure incidentally in his poems and the fact that recurs in respect of three or four Chera rulers and chieftains that they wore "the garland of the seven crowns" would refer to the seven chieftains known in Tamil literature as the seven last patrons of literature. The Chola kings are in order Peruviral Killi, his successor Ilanjet-Chenni, his successor Carikāla with an indirect reference to a number of Killis (Cholas) who fought in fratricidal war bringing on the active intervention of the great Red Chera (Śenguttuvan). In regard to the Chera, he celebrates Imayavaramban Nedum Śēral and his son Śenguttuvan Śēra a younger brother of the first and another chieftain Nārmudi Chēral figuring as it were in between the two. We have certainly to bring in within the age of Paranar the chief Pēhan, otherwise called Vāyāvikkon-perum-Pēhan. The mention of the Chola and the Chera who fought and fell on the field of battle brings him

into contemporaneity with another poet Kalāttalayār, who celebrated the same event. This latter poet is also stated in another poem by Kapilar to have destroyed the capital city Araiyam of Irungō Vēl by Kapilar whose elder contemporary he must have been.

In this connection we may consider a few references in Māmūlanār, the other poet to whose work we made reference already in a previous chapter. One reference of importance is in poem 55 Aham, which refers in specific terms to the battle of Vennil where the Chola Karikāla defeated the contemporary Chera, who feeling ashamed of a wound on the back is stated to have committed suicide by starvation. This very same incident is referred to by two other poets Kalāttalayār and Vennikkuyattiyār in almost the same specific terms respectively in Puram 65 and 66. While the first poet's reference may be considered somewhat indirect, that of the other two is quite direct and specific and is almost addressed straight to one of the combatants, the victor in this particular instance. This same poet Māmūlanār has in poem 126/27 of Aham :

to the Cheras' achievement against the pirates and this may lead to the inference that the poet was contemporary with him. He refers to a Pāṇḍyan also but gives no specific indication as to which of the Pāṇḍyans it is. There is in the same work 232/33 a reference to the Chera who fed the hosts in the Bhārata war. What is more particularly to our point at present is the reference to a battle where Evvi, a chieftain of the Pāṇḍyan country, one among the seven patrons fell in battle. There he mentions the name of Parāṇar and brings him in connection with the fallen chief as having praised his valour, and that makes Evvi contemporary with Parāṇar. Another chief that is brought into contemporaneity with Parāṇar is the Adigaman Anji of Tagadur (Dharmapurī in the Salem District). This chief is said in poem 114 of Mamūlar to have been in hiding along with his relations out of fear of a chief who seems to be Nannan, if the reading of the text is correct. In poem 207, Parāṇar refers to the Kollimalais as belonging to Ōri, but in the next following poem however, another author by name Kallāḍan

refers to the death of this Ōri. According to this, Ōri was put to death by Kāri of Tīrukkōilur who made over Kolli to the Chera king. The allusion here is to a war or rather a series of wars perhaps of ambition. Anji of Tagadūr laid siege to Tīrukkōilur of Kāri having defeated him in the field. Kāri not being able to make an effective stand against the enemy, went for protection to the Chera who was anxious to get possession of the Kollimalais. Kāri volunteered service, went across at the head of an army, defeated and killed Ōri and made over the territory round Kollimalais to the Chera. In the same poem this Kallādan refers to the battle Ālangānam where the "seven" were defeated by the Pāndya. We shall refer to this later. Without proceeding further unnecessary length we might now take it that Parānar was acquainted with the chief Kāri, Ōri, and Evvi, among the famous seven, not to speak of the minor ones. We have already referred to his connection with Nannan. Thus then we come to a generation, Parānar's generation of poets and patrons, that gives us a number of Cheras and



-Cholas in succession, as also the majority of the chiefs who go by the name the last 'seven patrons in Tamil literature.' We shall consider one or two other poets of the like eminence with Parānar and then say whether the postulating of a body called the third academy of Mādura is warranted by this body of literature. By way of summary however, we might put it here that the Chola Karikāla, his father and grand-father were contemporaries with the Chera Neḍum Śēral and his father, perhaps also this Chera's son Śenguttuvan. The chieftains are Pēhan, Ōri, Kāri, Adigan, Evvi, Nannan and Āay-Eyinan. All these seem referable to the same age, that of the generation covered by Parānar. The poets that we have already come across are Parānar himself, Māmūlanār, Kapilar, Ariśil Kīlār, Perungunrūr kīlār, Kalāttalaiyār, Vennikkuyattiyār and Kallādanār, and these give promise of a complete academy itself. Though Parānar does not in so many words specifically refer to any particular Pāṇḍīyan, there is one reference which ought not to be passed over and that is in Aham 115. There is a

the battle referred to here at Kūdarp-Parandalai. The first part Kūdai would refer to Madura, the second part might be simply interpreted as a battle-field. In this battle the Pāndya beat off from the place the two other kings who simultaneously attacked him and captured their war drums. This sounds very much like the war of the young Pāndya king known in literature as victor at Talaiyālangānam, whose history we shall take up for consideration.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE AGE OF THE TALAIYALANGANAT- TUP-PANDYAN NEDUM'SELIYAN

#### *I — Sangam Literature*

This personage is a great Pāṇḍyan, one of the latest perhaps of the age we have taken for consideration. This complex name is composed of the general designation with a few modifying adjuncts. Śeliyan or Nedumśeliyan may be considered his name. To distinguish him from others of that name, because this is a common enough name among the Pāṇḍyas, the attribute is added of his victory at Talaiyālangānam, identical probably with a village not far from the Nīḍāmangalam Railway station in the Tanjore district. In that battle he is stated to have won a victory against a combination of all the kings and chieftains of the Tamil country. The fact that he is given this distinct epithet shows that, to the literary men of the age, there was no other battle of that name known, nor of a Pāṇḍyan who stood victorious.

To us this character is of the highest importance historically, because it seems to be he that comes into connection with the Pāndyas of a later time specifically referable in inscriptions. From the poems it is clear he came to the throne of his fathers quite young. The neighbouring powers taking advantage of the new succession and of the youthfulness of the successor, marched with their allies, the five chieftains, and laid siege to Madura. It is then that the youthful monarch is stated to have made the poem 72 of Puram in which he said "they look ludicrous indeed <sup>1</sup> who saying that this ruler is young marched at the head

1 நஞ்சக்கனரே நாடுமீக்கூருந்

ரினைய னிவனென ஷனையக்கூறிப்

படுமணியிரடடும பாவடிப்பனைத்தா

னெடுநலயானையுந தேருமாவும

படையமை மறவருமுடையம் யாமென

றுறுதுப்பஞ்சாதுடல சினஞ்செருக்கிச

சிறுசொற சொல்லிய சினங்கெழு வேந்தரை

யருஞ்சமஞ்சிதையத் தாக்கிமுரசுமோ

டொருங்ககப்ப டேளனாயிற பொருந்திய

வென்னிழல வாழநா சென்னிழற்காணாது

கொடிய னெமமிறையெனக கண்ணீர்பரப்பிக

குடிபழிதுறறுங் கோலேனஞ்சுக

வோங்கிய சிறப்பினுயாநத் கேளவி

of their vast armies to the siege of my capital talking lightly of my prowess. If in this war I do not defeat their armies and capture all their war drums and themselves as prisoners, may my rule offer no protection to my subjects, may my subjects weep for lack of it, and blame me as an unworthy monarch, may the poets of my court with Māngudi Marudān cease to celebrate me in poems of praise." The same sentiment and the mean advantage that the other rulers took of his youth, and what they thought his helpless condition, are portrayed in the four next following poems by one poet who goes by the name Iḍaik-Kunrūr Kīlār, who says in the first that the seven rulers marched upon the one king, Pāndya. He expresses surprise at the unusual sight of the whole body of 'seven' attacking the single ruler. In the following three poems he refers to the youth of the Pāndyan and of the attack

மாங்குடிமருதன் தலைவனாக  
 வலகமொடுநில இயபலா புகழ்சிறப்பிற்  
 புலவா பாடாது வரைகவென்னிலவரை  
 புரப்போர புனகணகூர  
 விரப்போரகீயா வினமையானுறவே

The Pāndyan of Talaiyūlangūnam Puram 72.

being delivered upon his city wherefrom he beat the enemies off to their own territory and destroyed them there. That he was attacked outside his own city, is referred to in Aham 115 of Paranaṁ.<sup>2</sup> It was this battle that was celebrated elaborately both in the Mādurai Kāñchi of Mānguḍi Marudan, otherwise referred to as Mānguḍi Kilār, and the poem Nedunal Vāḍai of Narkīnar perhaps refers to the same campaign. The battle itself is very well described by this latter poet directly in Aham 36.<sup>3</sup> Of the poets

2 மையனியானை மறப்போச செழியன்  
பொயயாவிழவிற கூடறபறந்தலை  
யுடனே ந தெழுந்த விருபெருவேந்தா  
கடன் மருள பெருமபடை கலங்கத்தாககி  
யிரங்கிசை முரசுமொழியப பரந்தவ  
ரோடு புறங்கண்ட ஞானறை

Paranaṁ in Aham. 115.

3 கொயசவாப புரவிச கொடித்தேரசு  
செழியினுலங்கானத்த தன்றலைசிவப்பசு  
சேரல, செம்பியன், சினங்கெழுதினியன்,  
போவலியானைப் போலம்பூனெழினி,  
நாரற்கறவி னெருமைபூரன்,  
நேங்கழ கலத்தியபுலாந்த சாருதினி  
ருங்கோவேண் மானியநோய்பொருகன் (னென்)  
நெழுவா கலவலமடங்க வொருபகல  
முரசோடு வெண்குடை (ய) கப்படுததுரைசெலக  
கொன்றுகளம் வேட்டஞானறை

Narkkīnar in Aham, 36.

that celebrated this great Pāndyan, Mānguḍi Marudan was perhaps the oldest and the most respected. Next follows the great poet and grammarian Narkīrar. Another one of equal eminence was Maḍurai Marudan Ilanāgan, as he was called. Another important poet was Kallāḍan, besides Kudapulaviyanār, Iyūr Mudavanār, Kārīkkannan of Kaveripatam and Iḍaīk-Kunrūr Kīlar.

This famous battle of history is described in some detail by Narkīrai who sets down, in Aham 36 already referred to, the combatants against him as Śeral, Śēmbian (Chola), Titiyan, Elini (son of the Adiyaman Anji of Tagadur), Erumaiyūrān, Irungō Vēnmān, Tērpporunan. Aham 208 <sup>4</sup> of Kallāḍan refers to the battle of Ālangānām and speaks of the seven, referring in the same poem as an event of the past the capture of the Kollimalais by Kāri from

4 பொன்னணி நெடுநதோத தெனரை கோமான  
எழவுறழ தணிதோளியறோச செழிய  
னேரா வெழுவரடிப படக்கடந்த  
வாலங்கானத்தாரபயினும் பெரிதென

## TALAIYALANGANAT-TUP-PANDYAN

Ōri, and its gift to the Chera by the form  
 Among these seven were the Chera and  
 Chola who are taken to be respectively  
 Chera Yānaik-kat-Chēy Māntaram Ś  
 Irumporai and the Chola Rajasūyam V  
 Perunarkilli, who together are celebrated l  
 poet by name Vāḍavannakkān Perumjāt  
 though the two are not connected by nam  
 the poem itself <sup>6</sup> This defect is remedied t  
 great extent by the direct reference in Pu  
 17 of Kurungōliyūr Kīlūr of the imprisonm  
 of Yānaik-kat-Chēy by the superior force  
 the Pāṇḍya, who is clearly this Pāṇḍyan  
 Talaiyālangānam <sup>7</sup> That this Chera chie  
 sometimes referred to with the attrib  
 of the elephant-look is clearly explained

5 முகந்தர மன்னன் கழஞ்செழுந்தாரி  
 செலவாடவலிசை நிறுத்தவலவில்  
 லோரிக்கொன்று சேரலாகித்த  
 செவவாய்ப பலவின் பயங்கெழும்கொலி

*Ibid* in Aham 20

<sup>6</sup> Puram 125

<sup>7</sup> ll 20 and 21 read in connection with the o  
 parison to elephant fallen into a pit. See also Com  
 tary on p 23 Mah Swaminathaier's edition



Puram 22.<sup>8</sup> Another poet Porundil Ilangiran celebrates this Chera, of the elephant-look, and makes a very interesting reference in the course of the poem to a remark made by the Chera in respect of the older poet Kapilar, which gives us an idea of the age to which we shall have to allot this group of poets and patrons. The reference is "it were better that there was now alive Kapilar of illustrious name, whose skill in making poetry, and whose information on matters of importance, were unparalleled" The poet says that this remark was made by the prince himself and approves of it, following that if he were alive he would certainly set forth the praise of the Chera's country in suitable poetry.<sup>9</sup> The group

8 ஒங்கு கொல்லியோரடு பொருக  
வேழ நோக்கின் விற்றலவெஞ்சேய

மாந்தரஞ் சேரலிருமபொறை யோமபியநாடே

Kurungōliyar Kilār in Puram 22

9 செறுத்த செயயுட செயச செந்நாவின  
வெறுத்த கேளவி வினங்குபுகழக கபில  
னினனனனனனனனனனனனனனனனனனன  
னாடு கொளவரிசைக கொப்பப  
பாடுவன மனனாறபகைவரைக கடப்பே

Porundil Ilangiran in Puram 53.

therefore is to be referred to a time after the death of the poet Kapilar whom we have already referred to as a comparatively junior contemporary of Paravar

This same conclusion is forced upon us by Narkirar, another contemporary poet who celebrated elaborately this same Pāndyan. In Abam 78, Narkirar refers to Pāri of Parambunādu, the life-long friend of the elder poet Kapilar, who was at one time besieged by the three kings and some chiefs, and who being hard pressed for food in his citadel, employed parrots to fly out of the fort and bring in ears of corn for the use of the besieged on the advice of Kapilar. This is the last siege of Pāri's fortress and we know from Kapilar's history that Pāri fell in this siege and Kapilar went forward with the two daughters of Pāri thus orphaned to get them married properly. This brings Narkirar into connection with Kapilar, as a younger and not perhaps very remote contemporary. In 253-52 there is a reference to the Pāndya having driven away the Kongar, wherefrom is not exactly stated. In the same poem this Narkirar refers

to the chief Eiumai and his country. In 290-89 of the same poet there is a flattering reference to a Chera and in 345 the Pāṇḍyan is said to have defeated the Chola in Kūdal (Madura). The camp life of this Pāṇḍyan when he is out for war forms the theme of his poem Nedunal Vadaḷ, one of the Pattuppāṭṭu. We shall revert to this Narkīrar presently. But we may note in passing here, Puram 57, where a poet by name Kāri Kannan of Kaveripattanam exhorts the Pāṇḍya to desist under all circumstances, from cutting down what are called Guard-trees (Kaval-maram). What actually the poet says is, 'you may let your army plunder the standing crops of the enemy, you may let them set fire to their cities, you may kill enemy warriors, but see that you permit the destruction of Guard-trees under no circumstances, the way that even the first three alternatives are put in, indicating they were measures to be adopted only under exceptional circumstances.

In this comparatively short investigation, we have come upon the three contemporary kings, the young Pāṇḍyan, victor at Talaiyā-

langānam, the Chera of the elephant-look, and the Chola who celebrated Rājasūya as contemporary sovereigns. A number of chiefs are brought in, but they are of a minor character. The greater chiefs, who went by the common designation, 'the seven last patrons,' are referred to only as having lived and gone, and the chiefs that figured in the battle of Ālangānam itself are chiefs of the following generation, as mention of Elini, son of Adigaman unmistakeably shows. Round these rulers are gathered some of the poets of the first rank, among them prominent mention must be made of Māngudi Marudan, Narkīrar, Madurai Marudan Ilanāgan, Kallādan and a number of others. Of these, the latter three, namely, Narkīrar Ilanāgan and Kallādan come together in a particular connection. Kallādan is believed to have written a commentary on the Tolkāppiyam. The other two, Ilanāgan and Narkīrar are both of them said to have commented on the work Iraiyanār Ahaporul, the third section of classical Tamil grammar. The story is briefly this: that in the days of the third Śāngam, the

Pāṇḍya country was afflicted by a twelve-years famine. The Pāṇḍyan finding it impossible to maintain his court asked the men of learning, who were dependent upon him, to leave the country and go elsewhere, as his resources were exhausted, when the famine ceased he got back together such of them as were still available, but found on examination that none of those that returned to his court knew anything, or perhaps enough, of this section of Tamil grammar. When he was much exercised about this, God Śiva himself took pity upon his anxiety and made this section of grammar, which is by far the biggest and the most elaborate of the Tolkāppiyam, in sixty sutras, inscribed them on copper plates and left them underneath the seat of the idol in the temple of Maḍura. The priest who went to clean the Sanctum in the morning found the plates which on examination proved to contain that particular section of grammar. Such a vast subject being dealt in sixty sutras made it extraordinarily brief, and could hardly be understood without commentary. So the Pāṇḍyan asked such of the Pandits as

were at court to take upon themselves to write the commentary. Some of them did attempt it, but the acceptance of that which was the best was a matter of great difficulty and could be done only by an expert chairman. They could not find a suitable one and had therefore to appeal again to god Śiva himself, who indicated the dumb son of a Brahman in Madura. The little child was five years old, born dumb, and was the son of Uppūri Kudī Kilān. His name was Rudraśarman. Of the commentaries presented to this dumb prodigy there were a number, as each one was read he kept quiet; when Marugan Ilanāgan got to read his commentary the child wept at certain places, when again Narkīrar read his comment the child was perpetually weeping in token of complete approval. The story when the extraneous embellishments are removed amounts merely to this that the abbreviated grammar known as Iraiyānār Ahapporul was commented upon by a number of scholars. The most approved commentary turned out to be that by Narkīrar, Ilanāgan's came next best, very much like Parimēlala-

gar's commentary on the Kural, having been accredited the best and being perhaps the only commentary now available, excepting for the statement contained in this story regarding the others. We have no evidence of the existence of Ilanāgan's commentary on these sutras at all. The whole question now is who is this Narkīrar and who was the Pāṇḍyan. A continuous tradition connects this commentator Narkīrar with the famous Narkīrar of the Śāṅgam, who in another story is said to have differed from God Śiva himself in respect of a particular detail connected with this section of grammar.<sup>10</sup> The old story related above, queer as it may seem at first-sight, still perhaps has a basis of fact and brings Marudan Ilanāgan, or Maḍurai Marudan Ilanāgan into contemporaneity with Narkīrar. It would be doing no violence to history at all to take these two as referring to the two poets whose name occurs so largely in the Śāṅgam works. The famous Pāṇḍyan in

<sup>10</sup> The poem in Kurumtogaḷ which was the cause of this difference is found both in the text of this classical collection and also is quoted in illustration of Sūtra 2 of the Irāḷyaṇār Ahapporuḷ (*vide* p. 39 of Mr C. W. Thamodaram Pillai's Edn.)

whose court they flourished must then be the Pāndyan victor at Talaiyālangānam. The commentary that has actually come down to us is the commentary of this Narkirar handed down by word of mouth through ten generations of pupils till, at last, Nilakantaṇ, the teacher at Muśiri, handed it on to others. The opinion of Pandits now-a-days is that probably a successor of this Nilakantaṇ, the great commentator known as Ilampūraṇar put it in its present form. It may be Nilakantaṇ himself that did this. The modern commentary, such as it is, exhibits two layers, one which is old with most of the illustrations in archaic Tamil from the classics, with the second layer superimposed where the illustrations to the extent of 315 stanzas of poetry are made on purpose in a more modern language to be ordinarily understood by the pupils. That it is so is clearly in evidence on pages 125 and 191 of the late Mr C W. Thamodaram Pillai's edition of the Irayanār Ahapporul where the classical illustrations are actually put into modern Tamil the poetic sentiments being the same, every detail.



The importance of these two commentaries consists in this that the modern stanzas all of them celebrate the exploits of a particular Pāndyan, several of whose achievements get to be mentioned in the course of these verses, and a close study of all these seem to indicate that they all went in praise of one and the same man. The older commentary contains illustrations, most of which seem to be taken from the classics which go by the collective name Śāṅgam works, and this commentary criticises in certain parts the Tolkāppiyam itself, so that in the age of Narkīrar himself, the Tolkāppiyam got to be commented upon, as in fact Kallādanār is said to have written a commentary for which there is old authority. Narkīrar's attempt therefore was one of abridgment to make the acquisition of this vast section of Tamil grammar easy. Casting aside the legendary part of the story, we are in fairness bound to accept the existing work as the work of the poet Narkīrar, handed down through generations, perhaps in oral teaching, and committed to writing in the present form at least ten generations, may be a few genera-

tions more, after the time of Narkīrar. For these ten generations, having regard to the elaborate course of study for learning such an abstruse and intricate subject, it would be very modest to allow a period of 30 years each generation roughly. Then it would mean that the second commentary or the first edition of the commentary was made some 300 years after the Narkīrai wrote his first comment. If then we could find out from the 315 stanzas, which give a large number of historical details, as to who the Pāndyan is in whose court, or under whose patronage, the commentary was put in final form, we could arrive at an approximate age. Without being much too elaborate we might say at once that this was the Pāndyan who won victories over his neighbouring kings and is referred to as Nēdumāran, who was victor at Nelvēli. He is given other titles such as Varōdayan, Parāmkūśan etc and is credited with a number of victories over his neighbours. Identification of this monarch is therefore of the utmost importance to Tamil literary history. There is the bare possibility that these

modern stanzas were composed in honour of Naikirai's contemporary, but important considerations militate against such a view. The stanza <sup>11</sup> quoted hereunder gives clear indication of the existence of the Śāṅgam, which a later Pāṇḍyan like the Kūṇ Pāṇḍya is given credit for in the Periyapurāṇam.

## II — *Epigraphy*

Such an identification seems possible on the facts available to us not only from these pieces of poetry that we find in the course of this grammatical work, but from other sources as well, and this has been attempted before us by the late Rai Bahadur V Venkayya, Epigraphist to the Government of India. In the course of a study of four Pāṇḍya grants to which we have already made reference, coupled with one or two others Mr Venkayya, made his own reconstruction of Pāṇḍya history, taking into

11 வேயும புரையுமெனரோளி திறத்தினறை

யெலலை யுளவினை

டோயுஞ் சிலம்ப துணிவொன்றறிந்து

தொன்னூற் புலவ

ராயுந் தம்முடிகேசரி கூடலகனகர்வா

யேயுந் திருமனை முற்றத்தியம்பு மெறிமுரசே

Irāyaṇār Thapporūḷ Com 167.

consideration the available information from literature as well. It is on the basis of Mr Venkayya's work that others that follow him base their own theories in respect of this matter. The grants are the Vēlvikkudi grant of Nedunjadaiyan, the Madras Museum plates of the Pāndya king Jatilavarman, son of Māravarman and the two Sinnamānūr plates. The details of these plates and the way that the Epigraphist went to work at them are exhibited in his usual masterly fashion by the late Mr Venkayya in his two reports to the Government for 1907 and 1908. It is hardly necessary for our purpose here to go through the whole of the arguments upon which the various identifications are made, and the considerations carefully offered for the identification and the difficulties in the way of their acceptance could all be studied in the reports referred to. The following genealogical table of the succession of the Pāndyas based on these four and a few other dated inscriptions since published is set down here for convenience of reference in the same manner that the late Mr Venkayya gave it

# Pāndyādhirāja Paramēvara Mudukuḍumi Palśālai-Peruvaludi,

Kalabhra interregnum

1 Kaḍungon Pāndyādhirāja.

2. Adhirāja Māravarman Avaniśūlāmani.

3 Śeliyan Śāndan

4. Māravarman Arikēsarin Asamasaman, defeated the army of Vilvēli at Nelvēli

5 Kōchchadaiyan Raṇadhira, fought the battle of Marudūr, defeated the Mahāratha in the city of Mangalāpuram

6 Arikēsarin Parāṅkuśa Māravarman Tēr-Māran, defeated the Pallava at Kulumbūr, conquered the Pallavas at Samkaramangai, Rājasimha (1) defeated Pallavamalla, renewed the walls of Kūḍal, Vanji and Koli

7. Jatila Nedunjadaiyan Palāntaka, defeated the Kādava Peunāgadam, (donor of the Vēlvikuḍi grant), A D 769—70

8 Rājasimha (II)

9 Varaguna-Mahārāja, Jayantavarman (?)

10 Śrīmāra, Śrīvallabha, Ēkavīra, Parachakrakōlāhala, conquered Māya-Pāndya, Kērala, Simbala, Pallava and Vallabha, Pallavabhanjana

11 Varaguṇavarman ascended the throne in A D 862 863

12 Parāntaka, Viranārāyaṇa Śadaiyan, fought at Kharagir and destroyed Pennāgadam married Vānavan mahādēvi Jatila Nedunjadaiyan (donor of the Madras Museum and smaller Sinnamanur plates?)

13 Rājasimha (III) Mandaragurava Abhimānamēru

Our present concern with this genealogical table is the proposed identification of the famous Pāndyan celebrated in the 315 stanzas illustrating the Iraiyanāi Ahaporaṭ with No 6 on the table called according to these records Aṇikēsaṇ, Paṇāṇkuśa Māravarman, Tēr-Māṇan, he is said to have defeated the Pallava at Kulumbur, and conquered the Pallavas at Sankaramangal, he is called Rajasimha I, who defeated Pallavamalla, and who renewed the walls of Kūḍal, Vanṇi and Koli. That is the whole of the reference found in the inscriptions and put in abstract on the table itself. He was the immediate predecessor of the donor of the Vēlvikudī grant according to this, which the epigraphist dates A D 769-770. The considerations on which he makes the identification are given by himself in the following words — He takes the last four names in the Tamil part, which differs considerably from the Sanskrit portion, to be identical with the last four in the Sanskrit portion. Having done so, he states: "This is only the initial difficulty, when we get to the Chronology, the

complication is much greater, because the number of dated stone inscriptions attributable to early Pāṇḍya kings is very small. Besides, I am not quite sure how and where the names furnished by the Vēlvikudī giant fit into the tentative genealogy derived from the Sinna-manūr plates, which I gave in the last Annual Report." He states in another place, "it is unsafe to base any definite conclusions solely on the Vatteluttu portion, because a sufficiently large number of inscriptions in that alphabet have not yet been published with photo-lithographic plates for comparison. Proceeding mainly on the Grantha portion, and to a certain extent on the results derived from a comparison of the few available Vatteluttu inscriptions, we may not be far wrong if we assign the larger Sinnamanūr plates approximately to the first quarter of the tenth century A. D." The last name therefore of the genealogical table thus gets referred to the early part of the tenth century. This fact must be borne in mind in regard to what follows in relation to the discussion. It will be noted on the table itself that five genera-

tions intervene between the number six, Aukesan Parāṅkuśa of the table and Rājasiṃha III. Here is the whole argument of Mr Venkaya, which it will be useful to set down here for the purposes of discussion.

"The first point which I have taken into consideration in revising the genealogy, is that the larger Sinnamanūr plates probably belong to the time of Rājasiṃha-Pāndya, who was defeated by the Chola king Parāntaka I sometime before A.D. 921-2. The second consideration is that the Nedunjadaiyan of the Vēlvikudi grant cannot be identical with his namesake of the Madras Museum plates, but that the former must be earlier than the latter. The third point is that the Madras Museum plates of Jatalavarman and the smaller Sinnamanūr plates are probably nearer in point of time to the larger Sinnamanūr plates than they are to the Vēlvikudi grant. In other words, the interval of time between the Jatalavarman of the first two plates and the Rājasiṃha III must be smaller than that between the Nedunjadaiyan of the Vēlvikudi grant and his namesake of the Madras Museum plates.



the Nedunjadaiyan of the Vēlvikudī grant is apparently identical with the Māranjadaiyan of the Ānaimalai cave inscriptions. This is rendered likely by the fact of the kings in both cases being called Parāntaka. Besides, the *agnapti* of the Vēlvikudī grant is, in all probability, identical with the Mārangārī who excavated the Ānaimalai cave about the year A D 769-70. If any of the foregoing facts and surmises are overthrown by future researches, the whole genealogy will have to be reconsidered in the light of fresh facts that may be forthcoming. From the foregoing it will appear that the smaller Sinnamanūi plates and the Madras Museum plates of Jaṭilavarman cannot belong to No 7 Jaṭila as represented in the last report. Otherwise he would be identical with the donor of the Vēlvikudī grant, and paleographical considerations militate very strongly against such a supposition. Again, the numerals (up to 7), which are marked in the Vēlvikudī grant are very old, while those of the Jaṭilavarman plates bear a close resemblance to the corresponding symbols used in the larger Sinnamanūr plates. As both the smaller Sinnamanūr plates and

those of Jatilavarman together mention only three generations it may even be questioned if these three kings belonged to the main line or not. But until we have definite evidence to show that these three represent a distinct family, I propose to treat them as belonging to the main line, and to insert their names in italics where they may at present be supposed to come in. It is true we have absolutely no evidence that No 9 Varaguna-Mahārāja bore the surname Jayantavarman as represented on the foregoing genealogical table. But his son

been made out from the larger Sinnamanūr plates."

This long extract would show clearly the doubts and difficulties that beset the epigraphist in reconciling the various records of Epigraphy on which he mainly bases his particular investigations. But when next he comes to combine these with the evidence available in literature, it would be very reasonable to suppose that the difficulties become actually greater, and such identifications could only be made with very considerable hesitation. Even so it certainly would be more in keeping with the scientific spirit, that such an investigation would call for as a necessary pre-requisite to such an enquiry, to reconcile the various records of Epigraphy on the one side and arrive at what they have to say definitely first, then proceed on similar lines for what may be made out from literature, and then investigate the two separately to find where they would best come into connection with each other, if there is such connection at all. For such there seems certain common points. Mr Venkayya has already pointed out

that the first personage in the genealogical table is no other than the person known in literature as Palyāgaśālai Mudukudumi Peruvāḷudi of whom we have a few poems in the Puranānūru, but from the point of view of epigraphy he is brought into no organic connection with the rest of the dynasty as indicated in the genealogical table of Mr Venkayya. His name is drawn in incidentally to show that the village under grant was a previous gift and was known by the name Vēlvikudi because it was a gift, as a result of the performance of a sacrifice (Yāga). That point must be carefully noted in this connection. The second is the Kalabhya Interregnum. And then begins obviously the new dynasty beginning with Kadungōn. We shall revert to this Kadungōn and his predecessors a little later. But here we might pass on immediately to number six with whom Mr Venkayya shows an inclination to identify the Pāṇḍya who is celebrated in the modern poems of the commentary to Iraiyanār Ahaporul, and let us take note of the facts stated in a previous paragraph as to his achievements and their

general significance. He is given four alternative titles, all of which do occur among the 16 titles that can be made out of the part of the commentary under discussion. They are here set down for ready reference

- 1 Arikēsai
- 2 Nedumāian and Vānavan Māran.
3. Pūliyan
4. Uchitan.
- 5 Mummadil Vēndan
- 6 Viśārīdan
- 7 Vijaya Charitan
- 8 Paiānkuśan
- 9 Śatrudurandharan
- 10 Varōdaiyan
- 11 Panchavan
12. Ranāntakan
- 13 Ranōdaiyan
- 14 Mānadan
- 15 Gangai Manālan
- 16 Kali Madanan

Coming down to the battles referred to in the table, there are two such specifically referred, and one perhaps in general terms, and what is most remarkable in respect of these is that they are all referred as against the Pallavas, one of which

referring to a defeat of Pallavamalla Of these battles, the name Kulumbur does not occur and the other Śankaramangai of the genealogical table occurs in two or three places, not as Śankaramangai but only as Sankamangai, and at least in one place I fear the reading Śankaramangai will spoil the metre of the poem, but in none of the 14 battles which can be made out from the commentary does the name Pallava once occur either explicitly or by obvious implication The fourteen battles referred to in the commentary are

- 1 Pālī or Thenpālī against the Chola  
(Stanza 309).
- 2 Kūlandai or Kalattūi
- 3 Nāraiyūr, against the Chera (Villavan, this is sometimes used to designate Pallavas)
- 4 Śankamangai (possibly Śankaramangai)
- 5 Vallam
- 6 Ārrukkudī of Vānavan
- 7 Nelvēli
- 8 Kōttāru, where a victory was won  
and the Thennādu conquered, a  
naval victory against the Chera  
(241)

- 9 Kādayal of Śēralar (again naval)
- 10 Śēvūr against the Chera
- 11 Nedungulam.
- 12 Pūlandai of Vānavar (Chera) defeat  
of crowned kings and the destruc-  
tion of Vānavar's (Chera's) glory.
- 13 Vilinam, naval battle
- 14 Venmatti

A scrutiny of this list would show that this does not contain any of the names in the table excepting the possibility of Śankaramangai. As against this possibility it must be noted that in all the 315 stanzas composed in celebration of this particular Pāndyan whoever he was, there is not once any reference that would enable us to bring in the Pallavas, with the barely possible exception of 3 above. On the contrary it will be noticed in the genealogical table that number four, the grand father of this number six, is given credit for a victory at Nelvēli against the army of Vilvēli. There is very good authority for interpreting this Vilvēli as a Pallava also. Tirumangai Ālvar in various places refers to the Pallava almost

in the same terms In the second-ten of his Periya Tirumoli, the ninth section is in celebration of a Pallava and a Chola who made donations to the temple of Paramēsvara Vinnagaram (Vulgo, Vaikunta Perumal Koil) In the first stanza he refers to the designation Villavan as synonymous with Pallayan <sup>12</sup> In stanza 8 of the same section he refers to a victory at Nenmeli, which perhaps has a variant reading Nelvēli, and the Pallava is referred to in the term Villavan Whether this Nenmeli of Tirumangai Ālvāi could be taken as the Nelveli is at the very best doubtful, as the reading Nelveli may not quite suit the verse But from the other stanzas of the same section, the enemy that the Pallava fought against was the Pāndya, Tennavan, as he is referred to more than once Thus then the Vilveli defeated by Māia Varman Aṇikēsari (No 4 on the table) was probably a Pallava That is all the point that I wish to make out at present and if this is accepted, we find that the

12 பலலவன விலலவனெனகுலகில பலராயபபலவேந்தா  
பலலவன மலலையா கோன, [வண்ணகுழல,



dynasty indicated in the larger Sinnamanūr plates, and the others which go to support it to a very great extent, to be a dynasty of the Pāṇdyas whose principal enemies were the Pallavas of Kanchi. For this position of South Indian politics and international relations there is not the slightest variant in the commentary. In all the 315 stanzas there is not one reference to the Pallava, but there are on the contrary specific references to the Chera and the Chola. Four battles at least were naval battles against the Cheras, the country under contention was the Tennādu of the Pāṇdyas, that is the portion of the Pāṇḍya country which at present constitutes the southern half of the state of Travancore, which, at an earlier time, we already noticed, formed part of the Pāṇḍya country. Of these four battles, we have specific indications, but many others, almost half a dozen more probably, will have to be referred to that locality as a mere geographical investigation would, in my opinion, establish. The remaining three or four battles, such as the one at Vallam, say Pālī or Ten Pālī, Nedungulam, Kalattūr and

possibly Nólvēli and Venmattī may be against confederate enemies, who might have been either the Chera and Chola in alliance or these and other chiefs besides. And in such a detailed statement of these, one would certainly expect to find reference to the Pallavas, if they played any part in the wars found described in the 315 stanzas. That omission which may not lead to any particular inference in the case of the inscriptions, which are merely brief statements, would undoubtedly warrant the conclusion that the Pāndyan celebrity, whoever he was, did not fight against the Pallavas from the point of view of the commentary under reference, and as a further inference therefrom that the Pallavas had not risen yet to that position in which they had constantly to fight against the Pāndyas at a somewhat later period.

The later famous Pallavas, whose accession to power in this part of the country became a prominent factor perhaps about the middle of the sixth century, had first of all to maintain their existence against their enemies in the north and north-west, that is against the

Chālukyas, and the records both of the Pallavas and of the Chālukyas are full of references to constant warfare and the occupation of Kanchipuram itself several times by the Chālukyas. The latest of which, according to the epigraphical records, was one by Vikramāditya II of which there is a memorial left at Kanchi in the shape of an inscription by that ruler in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kanchipuram during the period 733-4 to 746-7<sup>13</sup>

With this constant warfare on the northern frontier, it is easy to understand that the Pallavas could not have had the time to extend their power across the Chola country to come into such active hostile contact against the Pāndyas. The latest time therefore to which we could possibly refer the Pāndyan of the modern commentary of the Irayanar Ahapporul is to the time of these great Pallavas. But even again supposing that this Pāndya might well have ruled at a time when the energies of the Pallavas were occupied in the northern war, there is a

<sup>13</sup> Fleet in the Bombay Gazetteer Volume I, Part 2 p 327.

reference or two to Kongu without the slightest reference to the Pallavas and that would make this inference impossible. We are therefore driven to look for this literary celebrity to a period earlier than the age of the great Pallavas of Kanchi beginning with Mahēndra-varman as the country of the Chola and the Pāndya and even the Kerala, occurs more or less in a conventional form among the conquests of his father Simhavishnu, who may have to be referred to the end of the sixth century, at least to the later half of the sixth century A D. Among various battles that Udayachandra, the general of the last great Pallava Nandivarman fought, figure Śankara-grāma and Nelvēli. Śankaragrāma may well be Śankaramangai, and even the Śankamangai of the Tamil poem. But there is nothing to connect Udayachandra with any Pāndya as his enemy. In regard to Nelvēli, we have some detail in the grant. Udayachandra is supposed to have slain in this battle the Śabara king, Udayana and seized his mirror-banner with a peacock's tail, and he carried on the war in the northern direction against a

Nishāda chief and in favour of the eastern Chālukya Vishnu <sup>14</sup> It is clear therefore that Udayachandra's battle of Nelvēli could not be the Nelvēli of Arikēsari Māra Varman, the *number four* of the genealogical table It must much rather be that of his grandson Arikēsari Parāṅkuśa, otherwise known, as Rājasimha, who is said to have defeated a Pallava Malla among the great Pallavas Two rulers bore this title Pallavamalla specially The one is Nandivarman, the last great Pallava and the other is Narasimhavarman I, in the first half of the seventh century The Pallavamalla, enemy of Rājasimha, must have been Nandivarman under this arrangement and it must be one of his predecessors that was defeated at Nelvēli by his grandfather. Therefore then for any reference to the battle of Nelvēli such as we have in the Commantery on the Irayanār Ahapporul, we have to look for a time anterior to that of *number four* on the genealogical table, which would take us perhaps to the end

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid* p 326

of the seventh century under Mr. Venkayya's arrangement.

### *iii. Later Literature*

Leaving epigraphy aside for a while, we have some other literary aid to make an effective search in respect of this battle of Nelvēli. There is one Pāṇḍyan known to literature specifically, and whose date can with some amount of certainty be fixed, who was victor at Nelvēli. This is no other than the Pāṇḍyan contemporary of Tirugnana Sambandar, who, having been a Jain, was converted to the faith of Śiva by Sambandar himself. He is supposed to have won a victory at Nelvēli and that fact finds mention specifically in Nambiyāṇḍār Nambī's Ttutttonḍa Tīruvan-  
dādi (vide stanza 60). The same fact is mentioned also by Sundara Mūrti Nāyanar, who in stanza eight of the Ttutttonḍa Togai refers to this personage as Ninraśi Nedumāran, victor at Nelvēli. There again we fail to have the clue as to who the enemies were that this Pāṇḍya overthrew at Nelvēli. If the enemies are specifically referred to as the Pallavas, we have to look for this Nedumāran among

those, whose names occur in the genealogical table. If the enemies are not the Pallavas, there is a likelihood that this may be the Pāndya celebrity in the commentary on Maayanāi Ahapporūl. Luckily for us there is some little of a detail given us in the Periya Purānam, which elaborates the statement contained in the two works from which references have already been given. Referring to this battle all that is stated there is that the enemies from a distance were met successfully on the field of battle at Nelvēli by this Pāndya in stanza 3 of this Nāyanar's Purānam. But in stanza 7, there is a little more information vouchsafed to us and that perhaps makes the position somewhat more clear. There it is said that it is the first of kings of the north whose army broke and fled from the field of battle, and enabled the king to wear the garland of victory along with his family garland that of the Maigossa leaf. The northerners (முனையழிந்தவட புலத்து முதன மன்னாபடைசரிய) in the one case and the enemy from the distant country (சேபபுலத தெவவரெதிரெலவேனி) have to be interpreted

as perhaps the Pallavas and therefore this Pāṇḍyan in all probability was a Nedumāraṇ, who was contemporary with Tṛuḡṇana Sambandar on the one side, certainly may be identical with the Pāṇḍyan, Māṇavarman, Arikēsari number 4 of the genealogical table. If the period to which this ruler can be referred on the basis of the epigraphical records should turn out correct, the likelihood of this identification becomes very great. And on the genealogical table we are left only one Māṇavarman, and that is the grandfather of number 4. Whether he is the Pāṇḍyan referred to in the commentary is at the very best only a guess in the absence of any clue from the grants. All that the grant says about this personage is that he was called Adhūṇāja Māṇavarman Avaniśūlāmaṇi, who made the earth his exclusive possession and wedded the goddess of Prosperity. That contains in it absolutely no clue to lead to this identification, but there is the possibility that this particular Māṇavarman, No. 2 in Mr Venkayya's table, might be the Māṇavarman of the commentator.



But before proceeding further on this line, let us look about a little about the other Pāndyan Māravarman, the grandson of this one whom we identify with the Pāndyan contemporary of Sambandar, and perhaps a somewhat junior contemporary of the great Pallava Nālasimbavarman. We have some facts regarding him from literature, which may be of some little use in regard to this particular question. He was a great Pāndya, a Jaina first who, through the influence of his minister Kulachchirai and his queen Mangaiyark-Karaśi, became a convert to Śaivism. The service that these three rendered in this particular behalf had been regarded by posterity as of such high value that the three have got to be included among the 63 Śaiva devotees. Mangaiyark-Karaśi was the daughter of a Chola ruler of the time and she is referred to as such by Sambandar himself. One reference in particular by Sambandar to her is worthy of notice here, and that reference is on page 501, stanza 9 of the Madras Dravidian Book Depot Edition of the 'Tēvaram of the Three'. The Chola, her father is there

referred to as 'the crowned Chola who ruled as king, well-known all over the world' That specific reference in those terms is an indication that the Cholas still retained some power, and had not yet lost their prestige as independent rulers as from what information is available to us we know that they had done in the days of the great Pallavas In another place, the same author refers to a Pāṇḍyan in terms which would warrant the inference that he was probably one referred to in the commentary on the *Itaiyanār Ahapporul*. In three or four places he refers to this ruler as Tennan or Pūḷḷyan, and at the same time describes him as exercising authority superior to that of the other rulers of the sister capitals In one place he refers to the Tennan, whose rule extended over Kōḷi and Vanḷi (stanza 4), in another he refers to the Pūḷḷyan, who was Tennavan and ruler of Kōḷi (Uraiyur), whose glory was equal to that of the northern king. In another place, he is referred to as Tennavan, who was also Śembiyan and Villavan. All these are probably references either to a contemporary Pāṇḍyan or an earlier Probab-

ly stanza six gives the clue that the temple was built by a Nēṭṭayan, who was also a Śembiyan, which probably means a Pāṇḍya, who had authority over the Chola, who is said in the same verse to have built the temple, probably meaning thereby that the temple had come into existence sometimes previous to Sambandar's time. If this interpretation is correct, there perhaps was a Pāṇḍyan previous to Sambandar's contemporary who could, without violence be described as having exercised authority over the Chera and the Chola, and whose authority could be considered as equal to that of the northerner, which in the language of Sambandar could only mean the great, Pallava Narasimhavarman, his contemporary. Those are the terms that we actually find in the general part of the verses in the commentary to the Irāṭṭanār Ahapporul, and there is probably the Pāṇḍya sovereign, the patron it may be of the commentator of the Irāṭṭanār Ahapporul. That takes us therefore to a time just a little anterior, it may perhaps be a generation, to Sambandar, say about the commencement of the seventh century or a

little earlier, and from that time which is perhaps the latest for this, we have to allow for some ten generations for Narkirar and the Pāndyan of Talaiyālangānam. We have already pointed out that an estimate of about three centuries will not be extravagant for this, and that would take us on to somewhere about A D 300, as the date of the Pāndyan of Talaiyāngānam at the outside. That length of time is not too much nor too extravagant for a tradition regarding the Śāngam to grow. For there are two references to the Śāngam at any rate of an unmistakeable character in the work of Nambiyāndaḥ Nambī already referred to. One is in stanza 49 where it is referred to with the names of Kapilai, Paraiṇai and Narkinai, and then again in stanza 26 referring to Kulachchunai, he is spoken of as the Adhikāṇi of the Pāndya who instituted a Śāngam. The Śāngam referred to in the second need not necessarily be the beginning and the end of it and the names associated with the Śāngam in the first is unmistakeable evidence of the reputation of the Śāngam having been correctly handed down to this

author There are a number of references to the Śaṅgam in the works of Tīrumangai Ālvar, who is anterior in point of time to Nambiyāṇḍār Nambi The larger Sinṇamanūr plates, one of the records we have so far been considering somewhat elaborately, have some references to this institution in it There is one passage in the Tamil part of these plates, which refer to three incidents of the utmost importance to Tamil literature The first is the victory at Talaiyālangānam, the second is the translation of the Mahābhārata into Tamil, and the third is the institution of the Śaṅgam The epigraphists, including even the late Mr Venkayya, were led into error in regard to these three by taking this Tamil version of the Mahābhārata to be the same as the Bhāratavenba of Perundēvanār, and equating these two with another Perundēvanār whose name figures as the one who made the dedicatory verses to several of the collections of the Śaṅgam works The Perundēvanār of the Bhāratavenba has a clear reference in the work itself to his Pallava contemporary, the Nandi-vaiṁan victor at Tallāru That would clearly

take him to sometime perhaps in the ninth century A D , while the reference to the Tamil version of the Mahābhārata in the Sinnamanūr plates occurs in the part of the grant which refers to a dynasty of rulers 'who had ruled, done these famous things and passed away, and then begins the new dynasty proper for which the genealogical table is possible. The late Mr Venkayya saw this difficulty, and concluded, that "it must therefore be supposed at least provisionally, that the Tamil translation of the Mahābhārata here referred to is earlier than Perundevanar's version" No other conclusion is possible and it must be said to the credit of Pandit scholarship that the late Mr Pinnathūr Narayanasami Aiyar, the Editor of the Narrinai stated in clear terms that these must be regarded as distinct from the purely literary point of view. Perundēvanār seems to be rather a common name, and there was one of that name in the eleventh century, who wrote a commentary on the grammar Vīraśōḷiyam. Therefore then there were two Perundēvanārs, besides this eleventh century one, one who wrote the-

Bhāratavenba probably of the ninth century, and one who made the Tamil version of the Bhāratam and also composed the verses in invocation and a few poems, just one or two, in the so-called Śaṅgam collection

The institution of the Śaṅgam is referred to along with this version of the Tamil Bhāratam and the battle at Talaiyālangānam. It is not necessary that these three should have happened together in the same reign, but they were events of history at the time the new dynasty perhaps began, in the estimation of the person who drafted the inscription. That would certainly agree with the conclusions we have arrived at from an examination of literature only. Although from what is stated in the Sinnamanūr plates the inference is not obligatory that these three should have taken place simultaneously, it is clear from the whole of our investigation that the Pāṇḍyan of Talaiyālangānam was a celebrity, who was associated with the Śaṅgam prominently. His chief poet Narkīrar was at one time perhaps a very important member of that Academy

One Perundēvanār, the author of the Bharata version in Tamil is a scholar of reputation according to this body of literature, who made the collections, and composed the invocatory verses for what goes by the collective name Śāngam works. Therefore then we find that the three incidents referred to are more or less closely connected, and are referable practically to the same age, the ultimate limit of which was perhaps the age of the Talaiyālangānat-Tup-Pāndyan. Before closing this part of the argument, there is one point further that requires to be noted and that is this. The Ahanānūru collection for which this Bhāratampādiya Perundēvanār made an invocatory verse is believed to have been collected together by a Madurai Brahman Rudraśarman, son of Uppūri Kilar, and the collection was made for the Pāndyan Ugiāpeiruvaludi. All the others must have lived and gone before this Brahman could make this collection, and arrange it in the three well-known divisions. We find the name of this Rudraśarman, son of Uppūri Kudi Kilār, associated with the commentary of Narkīrar of the



Iraiyānār Ahaporul He is described there in the same terms and with the same details, and if the two are one, as in fact we have to take them, to be, then these must have taken place in the lifetime of this one man, which must have followed close upon that of Narkirar and his contemporaries. Thus then all lines of investigation seem to lead us round and round only to the same conclusion, and that is the best period of Śāngam activity for Tamil was the second and third centuries A D

## CHAPTER VII

### ASTRONOMICAL & OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.

WE have hitherto desisted from any reference to the twin epic—Śilappadikālam Manimēkālai except incidentally. The two were works respectively of Ilango brother of the Red-Chera, and Śāttan his friend. On the face of it therefore they must be contemporary with the Red-Chera and so it is from all the available internal evidence which is marshalled in the "Augustan Age of Tamil Literature" <sup>1</sup> We would mention here one particular point to which attention has not hitherto been directed, and that is the occurrence of two passages from the Śilappadikālam in what ought to be regarded Narkīrar's commentary on Iraiyanār Ahapōrūl. The first reference is found on page 51 of Mr Thamodaram Pillai's edition, where the stanza quoted forms stanza 8 of Canto 7 of the Śilappadikā-

<sup>1</sup> See my Ancient India Ch. XIV.

ram, the other is on page 78 where the stanza quoted without number is the stanza 31 of the same canto of the Śilappadikāram. Taken along with various other quotations from classical literature, of which I am able to identify one from Māmūlanāi (Page 130 of Nai 14), another from Kayamanār (Page 118) these would indicate the class of writings from which the original commentary takes its illustrative passages. There are besides a number of references to Tolkappiam, and quotations from the Kural, as also direct references and allusions to other older stories such as the story of Pāndyan Mā Kirtī (on page 155 *Ibid*). These taken together give the impression of the classical character of the older commentary which would stamp it as the work of Naikuar himself. He has other references, besides the Tolkappiam to grammarians who held views different from his own. If it is permissible for us to assume, in the absence of the commentary, that Kallādan<sup>2</sup> wrote a comment-

<sup>2</sup> Old verse quoted on p 4 of Swaminathayar's Puram

ஒலகாபபெருமைத தொலகாபயியத்திற

குரையிடையிட விரகாகலலாடா

any for the Tolkapiam the reference may be to this author, a contemporary grammarian with Narkīrar. I shall not press this point further till my studies of Kallādam are advanced enough for me to express an opinion as to the genuineness or otherwise of the work. But enough has been said here to indicate that the commentary on the Irāīyanār Ahapporul is, in all probability, a genuine commentary by Narkīrar, the later commentator's service being confined, more or less, to throwing in the modern illustrative passages, and perhaps no more, as is clear from some of these illustrative passages being modern renderings of passages from the classics quoted by the older commentator<sup>3</sup>.

It is thus clear, and absolutely beyond a doubt, that the Śilappadikāram was a work anterior to this commentary by Narkīrar, and has had such a reputation then as to be quoted in illustration of some of the Sūtras, among other passages. The evidence adduced so far against such weighty and concurrent testi-

<sup>3</sup> See pp 125 & 191 of Irāīyanar Ahapporul C W. T's edition

mony is at least for one part epigraphical, which we have already examined in some fullness. There is one other which we shall have to examine perhaps also with some care; that is, the so called astronomical and chronological evidence for which the details are found in some of these works. Of this the Dewan Bahadur L D Swamikannu Pillai, who has done the most for this particular branch of work, may be taken as representative. While appreciating to the fullest extent the value of the chronological part of his work so far as they concern epigraphical dates we regret we are not in a position to approve of the method adopted in respect of these literary dates. It is matter for satisfaction however, that, to a great extent, he keeps an open mind, and that, in respect of the dates of the Ālvars, he has thought it fit to make a complete recantation, as these astronomical details occur amidst works whose character for veracity has been subjected to critical examination, and perhaps found wanting in regard to their chronological data. In respect of his investigation, which relate to the other works of

literature, he remains yet unconvinced. It is to be hoped that he will give full and unbiased consideration to what has to be said in this particular connection. The whole of his astronomical investigations relating to this particular part fall naturally into two divisions, one the chronological basis of Indian astronomy under which come in those various considerations as to the character of Indian astronomy, how far it has borrowed its material from other sources, etc., and this is purely a question for the Antiquarian to examine, and not one exclusively for the astronomer, and the other has relation to the calculation from astronomical details, of dates etc., in other words the calendrical parts of his scheme. We wish to say nothing more about this latter part than to remark that in regard to the few details found in the Śilappadikaram and Manimēkhalai that could at all be called calendrical in their character, they are made use of in a way which is very unsatisfactory from the point of view of any investigation which pretends to be scientific.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> See my friend Mr K G Seshu Aiyar's articles in the

The few details that the author mentions in the texts are taken in combination with perhaps the somewhat clumsy calendrical efforts of the commentator, who at the lowest estimate came three centuries after the author, and what is worst of all for the case, these details from this combination are altered in almost every essential particular to fit in with the fixed date 756 A D <sup>5</sup> It is not necessary to tire out the reader by giving these details as the curious may find it worked out in Mr Swamikannu Pillai's papers on this particular subject We shall content ourselves with merely pointing to the grotesque conclusions to which this kind of dating leads He has to ascribe the emigration of the Todas to the tenth century, he is driven to regard

Christian College Magazine from Sep 1917 pp 6-10 of the reprint in particular given in the appendix to this chapter

<sup>5</sup> While admitting that there is a somewhat close agreement, deliberately aimed at by the commentator, between the commentary and the text in respect of these details, we cannot help feeling that a set of detail that requires so many modifications cannot be held to be evidence of the decisive character that it is claimed to be in points of chronology.

perhaps the Kanarese language as the elder sister of Tamil, having had an anterior development because a couple of Kanarese sentences were found embodied in the Greek farce in the Papyrus of Oxyrhynchus <sup>6</sup>, of the first century A D, recently discovered. No student of comparative philology of these two languages would subscribe to this contention, but let that pass. We object certainly to the freedom taken in respect of the data of astronomy found in literature for the purpose of chronology. If that freedom should be allowed, we think it is possible to find other dates perhaps very much more suitable, (such as the A D. 201 and A D 202 of Mr K G S,) <sup>7</sup> than the date Mr Swamīkannu Pillai has pitched upon, and the occurrence of quotations from the *Silappadikāram* in *Irāyanāi Ahaporul* is simply fatal to this contention of the Dewan Bahadur.

As an illustration of his method, we shall here take up for consideration the passage containing astronomical details relating to the

<sup>6</sup> J. R. A. S 1904 pp 399—405.

<sup>7</sup> Vide appendix to this chapter.



death of the Chera of 'the Elephant-look', which occurs in Puram 229. We set down below, for convenience, the part of the poem containing the astronomical details.

ஆடியலழற குட்டத்து  
தாரிருளரையிரவீன  
முடப்பணையத்து வேமுதலாக  
கடைசுருளத்துக்கயங்காயப  
பங்குனியுரழுவததுத்  
தலைநாணமீனலைதிரிய  
நிலைநாணமீனதனெகிரோதாத  
தொனனாண மீனறுறைபடியப  
பாசிசசெலலாதுசிமுனனா  
தளககாததினைவிளகசாகக  
கணையெரிபரப்பககாலெதிரபுபொங்கி  
யொருமீனவிமுநதனறல விசுமபினனே

A glance down to passage will show that it is intended to convey the intimation that, on a particular night, a meteor fell from the sky. The poet proceeds to describe the disposition of the stars and constellations as he saw them spread out in the sky at the time of this portent. The details given are, in literal translation the nakshatra (asterism) of the day was (Krittikā belonging to Ādu (Aries), *re*, the first quarter of it, it was midnight which

was dark, the constellations visible were those occupying the positions between the root of Anurāḍha (முடப்பனை) to the margin-star of Punarvasu (கடைசுஞம்), in the starry expanse with rising Panguni (Uttara Phalguni) the constellation of primacy (கலைநாளம்) changed its position (descended from the zenith), the constellation of the day (நிலைநாளம்) was just rising over against it, the old constellation (தொனனம்) that which had done its course was dipping into the sea, in such a situation a meteor fell, beaten into flame by the wind and lighting up the sea-girt earth without going east without striking north-(both auspicious directions)

Mr Swamikannu Pillai tries to eke very much more out of the text astronomically than seems to be warranted, but before we proceed to show that we must refer to two mistakes of the late Mr Kanakasabai Pillai to which attention is drawn The first is the assumption of the latter that *the sun was in Aries* (Ādu) The second is according to the former, the confusion of the latter in supposing the *solar Panguni to be lunar Panguni*

which Mr Swamikannu Pillai states categorically "so far as I know is never the case" that Panguni means lunar Panguni. Whether the Tamils knew the lunar arrangement will appear later. Our concern at present is another criticism of the Dewan Bahadur in which the author of the poem and his commentator are both implicated, and they are both held responsible for what probably neither had it in mind to do. This my friend brings about by an interpretation of the expression Panguni Uyar Aluvam (பங்குனி+உயர்+அழுவம்). His own interpretation of the expression made up of the last two words of this is the 'Zenith Arc'. He complains that neither in the Śāṅgam dictionary nor elsewhere does he find any meaning which would justify the commentator's interpretation "the first fortnight of Panguni". One would like to ask the Dewan Bahadur wherefrom he got his meaning 'Zenith Arc' for the same expression, and whether he does not actually read his own chronological-astrology into the expression. The equivalent 'Zenith Arc' has, at any rate, too much of that look, though it

may not be a very bad modern derivative significance of the expression I set down here,<sup>8</sup> for reference, the synonyms for 'Aluvan' as we find it in the new Tamil lexicon under compilation, through the courtesy of my friend the Rev J S Chandler There are 12 such given, and not one of the twelve meanings given for the word Aluvam in the lexicon is anywhere near 'Zenith Arc' The actual primary meaning of the word seems to be

- 8 அழுவம், aluvam, ௩, ஆழ்தல்
- 1 Depth, ஆழம் கடனமண்டழுவதது (மலைபடு 528)
  - 2 Wide sea; கடல் (பீன)
  - 3 Pit; குழி ஆரிடாழுவதது (மலை படு 368)
  - 4 Extension, as of a forest, extended surface, extended level, plain, பரப்பு  
தெண்கடலழுவதது (கலி 121.)
  - 5 Country, district, நாடு (குடா)
  - 6 Field of battle, போரக்களம் வானமரழுவததவுணர்  
கொண (கூடமு அநதகா 51)
  - 7 Battle, போர் வானழுவநதானகி (பு வெ 8 23)
  - 8 Crowdedness, closeness, நெருக்கம்  
ஐவகைநெருப்பினழுவததுநின்று (பதினொ ிரு  
விடை 19)
  - 9 Abundance, copiousness, மிகுதி மறப்படைய  
ழுவமாரி (சீவக 802)
  - 10 Trembling, நடுக்கம் (அக நி)
  - 11 Fortress, தூக்கம் (திவா)
  - 12 War drum, முரசம் (அக நி)

merely 'expanse' and no more, all other meanings of the term are derivable from this. I set down below for comparison the following ten examples from classical literature which alone are comparable with the quotation from *Puranānūru* <sup>9</sup>. In none of these is there the slightest suggestion of anything approaching to 'Zenith Arc'. It would be impossible there-

- 9 1 விலவாளழுவம்பிளந்திடடு நோககி  
Chintamani 2319
- 2 ஆரத்துக களங்கண்டோ மாமரழுவத்து  
Silap v. 83
- 3 வேந்தராபபவெஞ்சமத்து வேலழுவம்  
Par. Vamba p 116
- 4 கூடாருடல வேலழுவத்து ஒளிதிகழுமபைம்பூண்  
Ibid p 70
- 5 அலங்கல மரழுவத்தார  
Ibid p 107
- 6 வரைமார்பில வேனமூழ்கவாளழுவந் தானகி  
Ibid p 79
- 7 குடமலைப பிறந்த தண்பெருங்காவிரி  
கடல மண்டழுவத்துச் சயவாயகடுபப  
மலைபடு II 528
- 8 குன்றிடம பட்டவாரிடரழுவத்து  
Ibid I 368
- 9 இரவில் மாடடியவிலங்கு கூடாடுகிழி  
யுரவுந் ரழுவந் தோடுகலங்கரையும் பெருமபாண 350.
- 10 பெருநீரழுவத தொதைதந்த  
கொழுமீன பொருநதில இளங்கேன  
Aham. 20.

foie to imagine that 'Zenith Arc' is at all an easy derivative from the etymological meaning of the word 'Aluvam'.

Let us then take the expression in its literal meaning interpreting the first word as standing for the asterism Uttara Phalguni, the second word equivalent to rising, the third word in its literal significance of a large collection or expanse. The significance of the expression then would be in the starry expanse with the rising Uttara Phalguni. Without importing unnecessary astronomical knowledge into the question, the expression would mean the star-bespangled sky at a period when the Uttara Phalguni was a rising star. Mr Swamikannu Pillai wishes to know where the commentator got the first fifteen days of the month of Panguni from. Speaking for the moment from the high pedestal of our modern knowledge, the month Panguni is the month when the full moon is in conjunction with Panguni or Uttara Phalguni, that is, on the full moon day of that month whatever that be, the full moon rises in the asterism Uttara Phalguni and keeps company with it to its

setting, that is, all the night. In the first quadrant of its course till it reaches its zenith both the Uttara Phalguni and the moon would be described by a star-gazer (not necessarily an astronomer or even astrologer) as rising. During the fortnight following the full-moon the Uttara Phalguni would be a little above the horizon at sunset, and has a course of rising, shorter or longer according to the day, in its journey up to the zenith. In the other fortnight of the month however, the Uttara Phalguni will rise above the horizon a little after sunset and will travel the whole quadrant from the horizon to the zenith from the point of view purely of the star-gazer. Hence it would be correct literally if the author described Uttara Phalguni in the bright fortnight as a rising star in the sense that this asterism has a course of rising through the whole of the quadrant from the horizon to the zenith. The author obviously meant this and the commentator is correct in his interpretation though not accurate from the point of view of mathematical astronomy. This may imply that the month then began on the day following the new moon and perhaps

meant a complete lunation. The name Tīṅgaḷ for the month in these classics (note passages quoted by Mr Swamīkannu Pillai, gives us a clear lead for this supposition, and the first half of it, or what is called a puksha, is what exactly the commentator renders by the expression, the first fifteen days of Panguṇi. It is thus clear that if we went by the etymology of the words and interpreted a peculiar expression in a way that an ordinary scholar, without particular astronomical predilections, would interpret it, the meaning becomes not merely simple but quite clear, and it is hardly necessary to hold anybody responsible for not having done what he never proposed to do, and calling him to account for what we ourselves choose to read in his language. What is much more, to draw far-reaching inferences from passages interpreted our own way is, to say the last of it, absolutely unwarranted. We shall now proceed to a consideration of these inferences.

The more general part of his investigation as to the very basis of his own theory, is that of the late Dr Fleet, and they rest upon more



or less false assumptions. The main point of the poet in the poem just examined is, we repeat, that on a particular day at mid-night, he saw a meteor fall, and prayed, along with his friends, that no harm might befall the king, as this portended a calamity to the ruler, but as the Fates would have it, the ruler died on the seventh day. The poet simply takes it upon himself to describe the disposition of the stars in the sky at the time that this meteor fell. Those details are taken and examined with a view therefrom to find out what exactly the astronomical system of the Tamils was. The conclusion at which he arrives on this investigation, after making the usual corrections, is nothing particularly definite in respect of the dating, as the poet has *not given the week day*, and as he has *not recorded the positions of Mars, Jupiter and Saturn*, at the midnight when the meteor fell. These very defects might have shown Mr Swamikannu Pillai that the poet was certainly not an astronomer, not even a Panchangin, whose function it would be to do that. Nevertheless the modern investigator proceeds to put himself three

questions which he answers his own way. The first of course is the omission to quote the day of the month, the second, the omission to note a week day, and the third, the omission to note the position of the other planets. We have already given the explanation for these omissions, but Mr Swamikannu Pillai's answers differ very considerably from ours. To find an answer he goes back to the investigations of Dr Fleet, and finds the answer in the position assumed by the latter that the week days were not known in India before some time about A D 400 and consequently the calendrical system dependent thereon could not have come into vogue before the 5th or 6th century at any rate. In finding an answer to his three questions, he proceeds to make the following remark. "The modern astrologer in the same circumstances would have endeavoured to discover whether the remaining planets were likely to avert or accentuate the disaster." Precisely. The poet was not an astrologer, as many poets are not and many other honest men at the present time who know the details that the

poet knew, and know no further. The further conclusions to which he proceeds are that there was a long period of time, in India apparently, ‘when *the movements of the sun and the moon were regarded without any suspicion of their “influence” as planets*, and that the Hindus also appear to have been singularly incurious for a long time as to the motions of the planets other than the sun and the moon—a circumstance which points more clearly than anything else to *the chronological origin of Hindu astronomy*, and also shows that *the practice of planetary astrology among the Hindus is of comparatively recent date*. The italics are ours, and we shall examine these two positions in some little detail.

We shall first of all examine the question of the knowledge of the week—day possessed by the Hindus. In regard to this, the first point to examine is, what exactly the nature of the week—day is and where we could expect to find reference to it. Dr Fleet’s position is “at some time not long before A D 400, the Hindus received the Greek astronomy, including the full list of the seven planets arranged

in the following order according to their distances from the earth which was regarded as the centre of the universe, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. Above Saturn the Hindus place the stars following the Greeks in this respect also, but meaning in particular the nakshatras or so-called lunar mansions and the signs of the solar zodiacs." In demonstration of this, he starts with the assumption that the Hindus received from the western world not only astronomy but also astrology, and that the former, was borrowed chiefly for the purposes of the latter. He fixed the time of borrowing a little before A. D. 400 on the ground that the week as such got fixed in the present day order in the writings of Firmicus Maternus who wrote between A. D. 334 and 350 and Paulus Alexandrinus who wrote in A. D. 378. He then proceeds to explain how the lordship of the day of the week got to be ascribed to the various planets. The rule as found in Āryabhatta and in the classical astronomers is that the planets are taken in the order of distance from the Earth, which was regarded

centre , and for this purpose the most distant is put down the first. They got arranged in this order

Saturn,  
Jupiter,  
Mars,  
The Sun,  
Venus  
Mercury and  
Moon

Taking Saturn as the lord of the first hour of the day and giving the lordships of the following hours in succession to the others, he would naturally be the lord of the 8th, 15th and 22nd hours of it , the lordship of the 25th hour would naturally go to the Sun and so on for the rest, so that we get the week beginning with Saturday and ending the following Friday Then Di Fleet proceeds to state that this Saturday got somehow equated—he does not say how—with the Jewish Sabbath, and when it was adopted by the Christians of the west, the Sunday became the first by an edict of the Christian emperor Constantine in A, D 321 He also notes that in the days of Dio Cassius in or soon after

A.D 230, the calendrical use of the planetary names of the week days had become general in the Roman world. So the week began with Sunday, 'the lord's day of the Christians and ended with Saturday the Jewish Sabbath, which however the Jews did not use. It is thus clear according to him that the Hindus took over, not the astrological week beginning with Saturday, but the Christian week beginning with Sunday.<sup>10</sup> He quotes the authority of Varāhamihira (died A.D. 587) who takes up the week in this order. He proceeds to examine where it would be possible to find authority for the use of the week day and does not find it in any inscription before A.D. 484, where the day of the week Thursday is mentioned. He finds the next such instance in A.D. 664 and just a few others between that year and about A.D. 800, wherefrom it had got to be generally used. On the basis of this Dr Fleet, and those that follow him, adopt as a

<sup>10</sup> Why the Hindus regard the Sunday, as the first day of the week is plainly enough due to the pre-eminence of the sun, as the name Bhattāraka Vāra, he quotes from the Histōpadūśa unmistakeably indicates

general principle that if in any undated work, the name of a week day did occur that stamped the work as a work probably published after A.D. 800 and possibly after A.D. 400 at any rate. That is the position of Dr. Fleet in regard to the week day. Let us examine the question rather closely. Kālidāsa makes a distinction between Nakshatra, Tārā, and Graha, by Nakshatra he means the constellations beginning with Aśvinī, and by Tārā he means stars other than the constellations, and by Graha he is said to refer to the five planets beginning with Bhauma (Mars), both the Sun and the Moon being omitted on the consideration that they are too plainly visible and therefore constitute the first two among the planets, the other five being planets proper as the Muhūrta Darpana explains<sup>11</sup>. The same kind of classification is followed in the Purāṇas but the Purāṇas cannot be quoted as against Dr. Fleet, who will not hear of any such, as they cannot be accurately dated. The tendency of western

<sup>11</sup> Raghuvams'a VI 22 & Mallinātha's Commentary thereon

scholars now-a-days is to date Kalidāsa on a variety of considerations, perhaps a little earlier than 400. But this is not exactly our principal contention here. There is a Tamil text which gives exactly the arrangement implied in Kalidāsa and expounded in the *Muhūrta Darpana*. The text occurs in poem 14 of the second section of the *Padirrupattu*, which celebrates the father of Śenguttuvan Śēra and is ascribed to an ancient poet Kumattūr Kannan<sup>12</sup> and the statement contained there is "you who resemble in glory the conjoint lustre of the Moon, the Sun, and the five planets beginning with Mars *which mark the days* (நாள கோள) This I believe one ought to take as a reference to the planets, and the planets of the week without the slightest room for doubt, and

12 நாளகோழிககண ஞாயிறு சன்மயழ

லைந்தொருங்கு புணாதத

விளக்கத்தனையை

The Commentator explains the passage thus —  
கோளமெனறது, விளக்கமில்லா இராகு கேது மெனலும்  
இரண்டும் நீக்கி நினைந ஏழினும் சிறப்பப்பறறி மேலெனப்ப  
பட்ட திங்கள் ஞாயிறெனலுமிரண்டும் நீக்கி நினைந  
என்பது.



the old commentator offers the following explanation of the passage. Attempting to explain the term used here for planets, he says that the term 'KŌL' is here used in the passage for the five because the two non-shining planets should be excluded, and the two brilliant ones, the Sun and the Moon being well-known are not usually included in that term, and therefore the term applies only to the remaining five. Of course the all satisfying answer of Dr Fleet and those that follow him would be that this poem should have been composed after A.D 400, and therefore cannot be quoted in authority as against the general position assumed. Quite so, if the general position assumed had been proved, but there is very much more in the text than actually meets the eye. It will be noticed that the text begins with the Moon, next comes the Sun, and next follow the five in the present week day order, that is not beginning with the Sunday week. The mention of the Moon first is not forced upon the poet by the exigencies of metre. The line would read quite correctly even with the Sun before.

What is the inference therefrom? Dr. Flect takes it that although intercourse, between the Greeks and the Hindus was perhaps pretty continuous since the days of Alexander, they somehow did not borrow astiologial astronomy from the Greeks till all of a sudden something dawned upon them at the end of the fourth century to borrow it from the Christian astronomers of the Roman Empire We would draw attention here to the order in which these week days do occur in a bilingual list now in the British Museum, where the seven, full planetary group is arranged as follows —

The Moon, Sin,  
 The Sun, Shamash,  
 Jupiter, Merodach,  
 Venus, Ishtar,  
 Saturn, Ninip (Ninig)  
 Mercury, Nebo,  
 Mars, Nergal

The reason for this primacy of the moon is due to an early notion of the Sumerians who regarded the Moon as 'the measurer', and for certain purposes as the parent of the Sun Of these, the five planets, and the Sun and the Moon got to be connected with the chief gods

of the Hammurabi Pantheon very early, and a study of the various attributes of these gods associated with the days make them somewhat different in character from what the Greeks must have had in mind when they made the equations to the gods of their Pantheon To take only one instance, take Mercury, Nebo (Nebu) of the Babylonians He was no doubt the messenger and announcer of the gods as the Greek Hermes Professor Jastrow has it of him "Like Ea, <sup>13</sup> he is the embodiment and source of wisdom The art of writing—and therefore of all literature is more particularly associated with him The common form of his name designates him as the god of the Stylus<sup>14</sup> " This is a character for Jupiter, that agrees far closer with that of the Hindus than anything that the Greeks have to show Although in this bilingual record the planets are not arranged in the order in which we have

<sup>13</sup> It must be noted that Ea is the Babylonian god that comes nearest in conception to the Indian Vishnu the deity presiding over Jupiter

<sup>14</sup> Aspects of Religious Beliefs and Practice in Babylonia and Assyria Page 95

them at present, the heading of the list by the moon is a matter of importance particularly in respect of its Sumerian associations. Could it not be that the Tamils got this peculiarity from Babylonians direct, if they could not have given that position to the Moon for the same reason that the Sumerians did? In this connection, the character given to Mars may also be studied usefully. Mars is described by professor Pinches as 'Lord of the great habitation', which according to him would be a parallel to that of his spouse, Ereshki-gal<sup>15</sup>. Of this kind of greatness for Mars, there is nothing corresponding among the Hindus, but when Nergal got to be associated with Erech particularly, he symbolised the destroying influence of the Sun and was accompanied by the demons of pestilence. "Mars was a planet of evil, plague and death its animal form was the wolf". The Indian god associated with Mars is Yama or death, the nearest approach to Babylonian Nergal. Whereas in Greece, Mars was associated with Ares, the War-God, who assumed his boar-

<sup>15</sup> The goddess of the nether world

form and slew Adonis. The Indian, rather the Aryo-Indian Association of Agni with Mars finds support in Babylonian tradition. We would invite attention to the following extract in this connection —

‘The drift of Babylonian culture was not only directed westward towards the coast of Palestine, and from thence to Greece during the Phœnician period, but also eastward through Elam to the Iranian plateau and India. Reference has already been made to the resemblances between early Vedic and Sumerian mythologies. When the “new songs” of the Aryan invaders of India were being composed, the sky and ocean god, Varuna, who resembles Ea-Oannes and Mitra-who links with Shamash, were already declining in splendour. Other cultural influences were at work. Certain of the Aryan tribes, for instance, buried their dead in Varuna’s “house of clay”, while a growing proportion cremated their dead and worshipped Agni, the fire god. At the close of the Vedic period there were fresh invasions into middle India, and the “late comers” introduced new beliefs,

including the doctrines of the Transmigration of Souls and of the Ages of the Universe Goddesses also rose into prominence, and the Vedic gods became minor deities, and subject to Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. These "late comers" had undoubtedly been influenced by Babylonian ideas before they entered India. In the Doctrine of the World's Ages or Yugas, for instance, we are forcibly reminded of the Euphratean ideas regarding space and time. Mr Robert Brown, junr, who is an authority in this connection, shows that the system by which the "Day of Brahma" was calculated in India resembles closely an astronomical system which obtained in Babylonia, where apparently the theory of cosmic periods had origin.

Donald A. Mackenzie *Myths of Babylonia and Assyria* p 199

One would imagine then that the possibilities were that if the Indians borrowed these,<sup>16</sup> the chances of their borrowing from

<sup>16</sup> Reference may here be made to the article in the Bhandarkar Commensuration volume by Mr B C Tilak on the Veda and the Babylonian Creation-Epic

Babylonia were far greater than from the Greeks, and that so late, as after Firmicus Maturnus and Paulus Alexandrinus. In support of this position, there are a few more points which ought to be noted here.

In the arrangement of the houses of the zodiac, it is now admitted that it was the Babylonian scientist first of all who divided the ecliptic into twelve well-known divisions, of which there is a noticeable distinction in respect of the tenth house as it is known to the Greeks and the Hindus. The Babylonians called it Tebet, which stood for Ea's 'goatfish'. The Greek equivalent therefor is merely Capricornus, which means the goat. The Hindu equivalent Makara is much nearer the goatfish than the goat itself. The name of the planet Venus gives it among the Greeks the character of the woman-Aphrodite, and Venus was associated with Ishtar in Babylonia, but Venus is never associated with a female deity among the Indians, except for the fact that the Adhī Dēvatā is supposed to be Sachi, the wife of Indra. The planet itself is regarded as associated with Śukra, a man-rishi or a god-

rishi. It is now accepted by the world of scholars that the Yuga and the Kalpa calculations (the *exeligmos* of the Greeks,) which begin to figure in the Brāhmana period of Indo-Aryan history show very close associations with the Saros of the Babylonians, and in the naming and arranging of the cosmic periods, or ages of the universe, there is an apparently remarkable difference between the Greek and the Indian notions, which latter are in closer agreement with that of the Irish<sup>17</sup> The Indian ages are in the Indian order

17 शङ्खधोरवपु पुरा कृतयुगे नाम्ना तु नारायण-

सेताया त्रिपदार्पितत्रिभुवनो विष्णु सुवर्णप्रभ ।

दूर्वाश्यामनिभ स रावणवधे रामो युगे द्वापरे

नित्य योऽञ्जनसन्निभ कलियुगे व पातु दामोदर ॥

This passage from the Bālacharitam of Bhāsa, a dramatist of high reputation anterior to Kālidāsa states that in the Kṛtayuga Vishnu was Narāyana of Couch-white colour In the Trūtāyuga he was Vishnu, who measured the Universe in three strides, of a golden colour In the Dvāpara he was Rama, who killed Ravana, of the colour of Dūrya-grass (dark green) In Kali he becomes Dāmōdara of the enduring dark of collyrium This is quite representative of the orthodox scholarly view.



Silvern (White), Golden (Yellow), the Bronze (Red, seems to be rather dark green than red) and Iron or black, whereas the Greeks would begin with the Golden and put Silvern second.

In regard to the zodiacal arrangement of the Babylonians, Mr Brown the author of the *Primitive Constellations* quotes Diadochus, who gave a resume of Babylonian astronomical astrology in the following terms “The *five planets were called ‘interpreters’*, and in subjection to this were marshalled thirty stars which were styled divinities of the council. The chiefs of the divinities are twelve in number, to each of whom they assign a month and one of the twelve signs of the zodiac” This takes us to the question of the basis of the astronomical system of the Hindus. We have already pointed out that Mr Swamikannu Pillai regards the basis as essentially chronological, whereas, the basis of the Babylonian system is astrological and perhaps even seasonal. That this is so is in evidence as “the three constellations associated with each month had each a symbolic significance.”

they reflected the characters of their months<sup>18</sup>. This quotation is clear evidence that it was seasonal as well as astrological. We have early evidence of the seasonal character of the arrangement of the divisions of the year in the Tolkāppiam itself, where in Sutra 6, the six-fold division of the year is clearly made on the basis of the 12 signs of the zodiac, and beginning with the rainy season. The commentator, who of course is

sun, June-July. So that there is one division now which is altogether on the basis of the seasons of the year, and that it is the time-honoured division of the Tamils is inferable from its constituting the basis of Tamil division for all purposes of grammar and poetics, whether they rest upon the authority of the Tolkāppiam or no. But that this was not the sole basis could be proved by the fact that as in the case of the Babylonians, the basal idea of the Indian astrological system is the recognition of the astral bodies as the souls of the departed good, who from their distant positions exercised an influence over the world and mankind. That that was a very popular idea even from the Vedic times could be proved by the following. The Āpastamba Dharmasūtra,<sup>19</sup> which is an early Sūtra and without question earlier than A. D. 400, has a statement, in the chapter dealing with the spiritual advantages of having a son, that those of "Good Works" in life shine like the Great Bear (Saptarshimandala), high above all

<sup>19</sup> II IX 24, 13 Tatra yē punyakṛtāḥ, tūshām prakṛtayah parā jvalantyah upalabhyantē

else, as authority for this is quoted the Taittiriya Samhita <sup>20</sup> The same idea occurs in the Rāmāyana in a more general and popular connection when Indrajit, son of Rāvana, by his extraordinary power of magic throws the head of Rāma before Sita in her garden hermitage She bemoans the loss of her husband She is made to state in this connection that he had joined in heaven the company of his father and there, having become a Nakshatra, he is said to see 'the whole of the Ikshvāku family of royal rishies, but, as she said, he neglected to see her in that forelorn condition down below' <sup>21</sup> This is a clear

20 Sukrtām vā ūtāni

jyōtimsi yannakshatrāni

Tai Sam V 17 9

21 Pitrā Daśarathena tvam svaśurēna mamānagha  
sarvaiścha pitribhiḥ sārddham nūnam svaṛgē samā-  
gataḥ

divi nakshatrabhūtaḥ tvam mahatkarṃakrtām priyam.  
punyam rājarashiḥ vamaśam tvam ātmanah sama-  
vākṣhasū

kim māmna prākṣhasē rājan &c.

indication of the general belief of men of good deeds being transformed into stars, an idea quite similar to that which constitutes one of the main items of Babylonian astronomical belief, with of course characteristic minor differences. The same authority quoted already has it that "the basal idea in Babylonian astrology appears to be the recognition of the astral bodies as spirits or fates, who exercised an influence over the gods, the world, and mankind. These were worshipped in groups when they were yet nameless." It must be noted here that these groups were general groups of seven in Babylonia. That this was so when the early Greeks came in contact with it is in evidence in the following quotation from Plutarch "respecting the planets, which they call the *birth-ruling divinities*, the Chaldeans lay down that two (Venus and Jupiter) are propitious, and two (Mars and Saturn) malign, and three (Sun, Moon and Mercury) of a middle nature. Mr Brown's commentary is "an astrologer would say, these three are propitious with the good, and may be malign with the

bad <sup>22</sup> That this was the early notion of the Greeks also is seen in a passage in the drama, Pax of Aristophanes In that comedy one character Trygaeus is shown as having just then made an expedition to heaven, a slave meets him and asks him is not the story true then, "that we become stars when we die!" 'Certainly' was the answer And Trygaeus is made to follow the answer by pointing to the star into which Ion of Chios has just been metamorphosed Mr Lang's commentary on this is "Aristophanes is making fun of some popular Greek superstition" (Custom and Myth pp 133 Et Seq)

The counterpart of this notion but exhibited in more serious form is the well-known story of Dhruva, which occurs in all the Purāṇas,<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Primitive constellations Vo I p 343

<sup>23</sup> त्रैलोक्यादधिकस्थाने सर्वतारागृहाश्रय ।

चरिष्यति न सन्देहो मत्प्रसादात् भवान् ध्रुव ॥

सूर्यात् सोमात् तथाभौमात् सोमपुत्रात् बृहस्पते ।

सितार्कतनयादीना सर्वर्क्षाणा तथा ध्रुव ॥

सप्तर्षीणा अशेषाणा ये च वैमानिकस्सुरा ।

सर्वेषा उपरिस्थाना तावद्वत् मयाध्रुव ॥

where the boy as the result of a severe penance was found a place above all the stars and constellations. The star Dhruva is according to Hindu astronomical ideas the pole star, which, as such, is above all the other stars and constellations and the Great Bear (Saptarshyah). When this idea got mixed up with the seasonal year of the Tamils in very early times, we get the state of things, which indicates a combination of ideas from two or three different astronomical systems, that is where exactly we find ourselves in the Tamil country.<sup>24</sup> There is one school of opinion which would ascribe all the scientific elements in astronomy to the Greeks, and that is what exactly is at the bottom of the notion that practically everything in astronomy, the very basal ideas of astronomy, in India was borrowed from the Greeks. To this school belongs only one Assyriologist of great reputation and that is Professor Jastrow, practically all the rest of the Assyriologists do not seem to support his view in respect of the indebtedness of

<sup>24</sup> See the concluding lines of the poem 229 of Puram with which we began this investigation

the world to the Greeks for scientific astronomy, and more recent research seems to support the majority Professor Goodspeed says that during the Sumerian period "the forms and relations of geometry were employed for purposes of augury The heavens were mapped out, and the courses of the heavenly bodies traced to determine the bearing of their movements upon human destinies"<sup>25</sup> What is worse for this claim in behalf of Greece is the recent discovery of a document from the archives of Nineveh, which gives unmistakable evidence of the existence of an observatory with a body of official astronomers, whose business it was to predict eclipses and issue circulars for the various ceremonies and observances that have to be made on the occasion of these eclipses Professor Harper's translation of one of these documents puts the case very well and the following extracts are taken from it with the comments of Mr D A Mackenzie. "As for the eclipse of the Moon, about which the king, My Lord, has written to me, a watch was kept for it in the cities of

<sup>25</sup> A history of the Babylonians & Assyrians p 93



Akkad, Borsippa and Nippur We observe it ourselves in the city of Akkad . . . and whereas the king, My Lord, ordered me to observe also the eclipse of the Sun, I watched to see whether it took place or not and what passed before my eyes, I now report to the king, My Lord It was an eclipse of the Moon that took place . . . it was total, over Syria and the shadow fell on the land of the Amorites, the land of the Hittites and in part on the land of the Chaldees " Professor Sayce comments " We gather from this letter that there were no less than three observatories in northern Babylonia one at Akkad, near Sippara, one at Nippur, now Niffer, and one at Borsippa, within the site of Babylon As Borsippa possessed a university, it was natural that one of the three observatories should be established there " <sup>26</sup> It is not necessary to go very much farther in regard to these We may state, however, that according to the calculations of Mr Brown, the signs of the zodiac were fixed in the year 2084 B. C (Primitive Constellations Vol II pp 147 et.

<sup>26</sup> Myths of Babylonia and Assyria pp 321—22

seq) If then the zodiacal houses were fixed so early and if such a similarity could be noticed between the systems of early astronomical notions both of the Hindus of Northern India and of the South on the one side, and the Babylonians on the other, and if some of the minute but characteristic differences noticed between Greece and India be the facts that they are, the inference seems irresistible that if there had been borrowing by the Hindus the chances are that the borrowing was from Babylonia rather than from Greece, whatever might have taken place in later times and in scientific astronomy. Even in respect of this what we find very difficult to understand is why an astronomer of the reputation of Varāhamihira, who examines all the systems of astronomy then known to him dispassionately, and agrees with some views of one school and other views of another, should actually be charged with having borrowed wholesale from the Greeks without an acknowledgment in the face of the fact that he often quotes with approval Yavanācharya as against Satyācharya and others, so far at any rate as astrology is

concerned. But that is not to our present purpose. What we wish to point out is that in the particular poem that Mr Swamikannu Pillai has taken for investigating the system of astronomy that had vogue among the Tamils, he remarks that the month Panguni referred to is the solar Panguni and not the lunar. We wish that he were on firmer ground in making that statement. That the character of Tamilian astronomy might be regarded as solar finds support in another passage of the same Tamil classic we quoted from before, namely, Padirrupattu. In poem 59 there is reference to the month of Māśi which is described as a cold month <sup>27</sup>. It must however also be noted here that the term for the month used there is Tingal (moon) which suggests a lunation being the basis of the month, so that even so early the two systems seem to have

27 மாசி தினறமா கூர திகைட்

பனிச்சுரம படரும பாண மதன

The commentary explains Māśi, as the character of Māśi and the expression Mā-kūr which gives the name to the poem means the doubling of the body owing to cold. Cf. Sans. Makarē Kumḍalākṛtiḥ. (In the month of Makara people double up their bodies owing to the cold.)

been in use together <sup>28</sup> It has perhaps now become clear that any general statement that the week day was not known would be very hazardous to make, and much less would it be true to apply that as a test of chronology in respect of works of literature making references to week days. It may also have become clear by now that the basal notion of Hindu astronomy was not exactly chronology although chronology did become a vital part of it later. The earlier notions certainly were based both upon the seasons and upon the astrological—animistic ideas of the stars in both these respects, showing considerable similarity to the early notions of the Babylonians and of the Sumerians before them. We shall not enter into the question of who the Sumerians were, and whether they were at all connected with the South Indian Tamils, but we might state in closing that there is very little doubt that

<sup>28</sup> Attention may here be drawn to the passage of Megasthenes extracted on p. 67 above stating that the Pāṇḍya country was divided into 365 villages so that the revenue of one may be brought in every day—This presumes a year of 365 days

there was communication by way of the sea between Babylonia and India at least in the 6th and 5th centuries B C, and that communication would certainly bear the inference that some of these ideas also travelled therefrom, although we are in no position to state definitely that the borrowing was all on the Indian side. The general assumptions having been proved to be false, the whole system built thereon, we fear, cannot stand.

We would point out in conclusion that the week day as such has no astronomical significance except that in the arrangement of the week and in the notion of the presiding deity of the day, astronomers do bring in the principle of the relative distance of the planets into consideration. But this, it strikes us, is only an astronomical after-thought to explain perhaps the phenomenon that had already been somewhat in popular usage. All else connected with the week and the week day is of an astrological character associated with augury and of the animistic notions underlying that. To say more than that, it seems to us, would be saying too much.

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VII

We present our readers in the form of an appendix to this chapter two extracts from Mr. K G Sesa Aiyai's article in the Christian College Magazine, already referred to, by permission of the author, relating to the astronomical data of the Śilappadikāram-Maninēkalai. We have already given a short excursus, in regard to poem 229 of Puram, of our own in the body of the paper.

(1) "The passages in Śilappadikāram that are discussed by Mr Swamikannu Pillai are found in நாடுகாண்காதை, text and commentary, and கடலுரைகாதை. The opening lines of நாடுகாண்காதை tell us when the departure of Kovalan and Kannaki from Kaveripūmpattinam took place. These lines are as follows:—

வானகண விழியாவைகறை யாமதது  
மீன்றிசமுவிசுமபின வெணமதி நீங்கக  
காரிரு ணினற கடைநாட கங்குல

Adiyārkunallār's commentary on these lines contains the following note 'அந்தச் சித்திரைத் திங்கட். புகுதிநாள—சோதி ,

வாரம ஞாயிறு. இத்திங்கனிருபத தெட்டிற சிதகிரை  
 யும் பூரணையுங் கூடிய சனிவாரத்திற கொடியேற்றறி,  
 'நாலேழநாளினும்' எனபதனான இருபத்தெட்டுநா  
 ளும் விழா நடந்துகொடியிறங்கி வைகாசி இருபத  
 தெட்டினிற பூவபககத்தின பதினமூன்றாம் பககமும்  
 சோமவாரமும்பெற்ற அனுடத்தில் நாட்கடலாடி ஊடு  
 தலின வைகாசி இருபத்தொன்பதிற செவ்வாயக கிழ  
 மையும் கேட்டையும்பெற்ற நாசயோகத்து நிரைமதிப  
 பதினாலாம் பககத்து வைகரைப பொழுதினிடத்து  
 நிலவுபட்ட அநகரத்திருளிலே யென்றவாறு

The passage in கட்டுரைகாதை which reads as follows —

ஆடித்திங்கட பேரிருட பககத்து  
 தழுவ சோகுட்டத தட்டமி ஞான்று  
 வெள்ளிவாரத தொள்ளொரியுண்ண  
 வுரைசானமதுரை யோடரசு கேடுறுமெனு  
 முரையு முண்டே

relates to the destruction of Madura by fire as the result of Kannaki's curse. Of these, the two passages from the text, valuable as they are, are not obviously by themselves capable of yielding any definite result, but not so, however, the commentator's note, and if the details mentioned in it be accurate, we ought to be able to establish with almost absolute

certainly the date of Śilappadikāram Mr Swamikānnu Pillai believes that the note by the commentator is capable of giving us a definite, unimpeachable date, and he exultantly says that "between A D., 1 and A D 1900 there was only one year, one month and one day, satisfying all the conditions, and that was Monday, 17th May, A.D. 756' Let us see if this statement is correct

The passage in question gives the following details —

(i) The month of Chitrai in that year commenced on Sunday, Thiruthiya, Swathi nakshatra

(ii) Twenty-eighth Chitrai, was Saturday, Full Moon, Chitra nakshatra That day the flag was hoisted for the festival of India

(iii) After 28 days, the duration of the festival, the flag was lowered.

(iv) On the 28th Vaikāśi, Monday, the thirteenth day of the bright lunar fortnight, Anushain Star, the bath in the sea took place and the lovers quarrelled

(v) On the 29th Vaikāśi, Tuesday Kēttai-nakshatram, which was a destructive combi-



nation, the fourteenth day of waxing moon, after the moon had set, when the sky was dark Kovalan left with Kannaki

It will be noted that these details are not given in the text, which simply says, referring to the day of Kovalan's flight with his wife, that it was after the moon had set on the last day of the bright half, and before sunrise the next morning, when the sky was dark. Supposing for a moment the details given by Adiyārkunallāi are correct, whence did he get them? The commentator lived probably in the twelfth century, and even if Mr Swamikannu Pillai's conclusion be accepted nearly four centuries had expired since the composition of Śillappathikāraṁ before this note was written. Did Adiyārkunallāi make his own calculation or did he repeat what he had heard? Mr Swamikannu Pillai opines that there should have been 'a continuous unbroken tradition of annotation dating almost from the date of the poem,' and the commentator in the present instance had preserved what he had obtained from earlier scholiasts. Even upon that explanation, the commentator's note could

not be accepted as really of value, as after all it might have been supplied by the ingenuity of an earlier annotator, and as in the process of repetition it might easily have undergone alterations in material particulars. However, the astronomical information supplied in the note seems to be thoroughly fanciful, as one can see from Mr. Swamikannu Pillai's paper itself. Besides, the reckoning of days in the note seems to be puzzling. We are told that the flag was hoisted on 28th Chitrai, Saturday and as we are told that the 28th Vaikāśi was Monday, the month of Chitrai in that year must have had only thirty days. So the festival, which was of twenty-eight days' duration must have closed on 25th Vaikāśi, when the flag must have been taken down, and one fails to see how the bath that concludes the festival took place as stated in the note, only on the 28th Vaikāśi. There is no doubt from the narration of the story in the poem that Kovalan and Kannaki left for Madurai on the night of the bath itself, before dawn of next morning, and yet we read in the note that they left on the night of Tuesday, the 29th Vaikāśi. Obviously

the note as it stands, even apart from its astronomical learning, is incorrect or not easily explicable. Is the astronomical information, at any rate, free from error? Mahāmahōpādhyāya Pandit V. Swaminatha Aiyar, the revered editor of Śilappadikāram, says in a footnote that the information contained in the note appears to be incorrect, but Mr Swamikannu Pillai, while extolling the learned Pandit's candour, rebukes the astrologer who enabled that footnote to be written for ignorance of astrological calculation. I nevertheless venture to say that the conditions in this curious note are impossible and that the learned Mahāmahōpādhyāya's footnote is justified.

To arrive at 756 A. D. Diwan Bahadur L. D. Swamikannu Pillai has freely edited the commentator's note. As regards the commencement of Chitrai in that year, he says that it was a day of Swati in the sense that Swati began on that day at 38 Ghatika after sunrise. He admits that ordinarily such a day would be called a day of Chitra nakshatra, but in explanation of the commentator's blunder, he states that the commentator appears to have

obtained his nakshatra by backward calculation from "Jyēshta," the star under whose malignant influence, Kovalan and Kannaki left for Madura. This itself would be enough to condemn the note as untrustworthy. What is the basis for holding that it was on a Tuesday which co-existed with Jyēshta star, that the husband and wife left their house in Kaveripattinam? Apparently the commentator's knowledge of astrology was so poor that he could not think of any other malignant combination except the popular Tuesday with Kēttai star, and starting therefrom he worked the details backward as best as he could. If the star on the first day of Chitrai has according to Mr Swamikannu Pillai, been wrongly stated in the note, so has also the Thithi, for he tells us that the third thithi is a mistake for the first thithi. Thus this part of the note, in order to make A. D. 756 acceptable, should be made to read — The month of Chitrai in that year began on Sunday, Prathama, Chitra nakshatra. The second part of the note declares the 28th Chitrai was Saturday, full moon Chitra nakshatra. Mr Swamikannu Pillai points

in 756 A D in the month of Chitrai, the full moon commenced at  $41\frac{1}{2}$  ghatikas after sunrise the same day Obviously, therefore, Saturday, 28th Chitrai did not combine with the full moon at all Indeed the thithi that was current at sunrise on Saturday and properly speaking the thithi of that day was Thrayō-dasi, the thirteenth lunar day However, Mr. Swamīkannu Pillai gets over the difficulty created by the commentator's inconvenient statement by inviting us to hold that by "full moon" must have been meant, a day near full moon! Why the commentator, who is at such considerable pains to supply details that will fill up lacunae in the astriological references in the text, should be guilty of such loose writing one cannot easily explain, but the suggestion is enough to stamp the statements in the note with unreliability

Relating to Kovalan's departure with Kannaki, the note says, it was on Tuesday, 29th Vaikāśi, under the malignant influence of Kēttai (Jyēshta), after the moon of the fourteenth thithi in the bright fortnight had set, and before sunrise. The statement is

very specific, and yet in order to apply it to 756 A.D., we should again hold that the language is loose. Though the language of the note would denote that Kovalan and Kannaki left in the small hours of the morning between Tuesday and Wednesday, and that the moon of the fourteenth thithi has just set, and that further Jyēshta co-existed with Tuesday at the moment they started. Mr Swamikannu Pillai finds that every one of these positions has to be given up. According to him, the departure must have taken place in the small hours of the morning between Monday and Tuesday, that is before the sun rose on Tuesday, that there was no combination of Jyēshta and Tuesday when they started, (as a matter of fact Anusham lasted till 10 A M on Tuesday), that there was no Chadurdaśi at all on Tuesday, which was on the contrary a full moon day. We are told by Mr Swamikannu Pillai that there was an eclipse at this full moon, and we may be permitted to doubt whether, if Mr Swamikannu Pillai's date be correct, that fact could under any circumstance have been

left out by the commentator who in the passage under discussion is trying to account for the subsequent disaster that befell Kovalan. A day of eclipse is astriologically condemned as highly disastrous for a journey, and it is strange that that pre-eminently bad omen is mentioned at all, when, according to M<sup>r</sup>. Swamikannu Pillai, Adyārkunallār is so scrupulous as to mention the subsequent co-existence of Jyēshta star with Tuesday, the first day of the journey, though the subsequent nāśa yoga so created could not astrologically affect the destinies of Kovalan and Kannaki. It may also be noted here, that on 28th Vaikāśi, Śukla Tryōdaśi and Anusham did not co-exist, as stated by the commentator.

I have tried so far to show how in spite of M<sup>r</sup>. Swamikannu Pillai's statement that 756 A D satisfies all the conditions laid down in the note, there is not even one condition that without very material alteration could be made to apply to that year. Mr Swamikannu Pillai has absolutely brushed aside the statements of the commentator as they are, and has substituted data of his own that will

support his view If instead of the eighth century, he had decided upon any other century, the same process of editing, the same process of revising and correcting might still be adopted to arrive at that pre-determined conclusion.

(II) The other circumstance that renders it impossible according to Mr. Swamikkannu Pillai to look for Śilappadikāram, before the eighth century is said to be supplied by Manimēkalai. The passages upon which the argument is built are these —

இருதிளவேணி லெரிசுதிரிடபத  
தொருபதினமேலு மொருமுன்று சென்றபின்  
மீனத்திடைசிலை மீனத்தகவையிற்  
போதித் தலைவனொடு பொருத்தித்தோன்று,  
மாபுத்திரனகை யமுதகூரடியெனு  
மாபெருமபாததிரம மடக்கொடி கேளா  
யகாநிக காளப பொழுதிப்பொழுது

Mani xi 40—46

ஈரென்னுறறோட ரெட்டானடிற்  
பேரறிவாளன றேனழம

Mani xii 77—8

பெரியோனடிதகத் பெற்றிறைக், கேனி  
யிருதிள வேணி லெரிசுதிரிடபத்  
தொருபதின மேலுமொருமுன்று சென்றபின்



மீனத்திடை நிலைமீனத தகவையிற

போதித்தலைவ னொடுபொருந்திய போழ்த்தது.

Mani xv 22—6.

The importance of these passages, we are told, is that they tell us that the Buddha will be reborn 1,616 years after, when the very time units that concurred at his first appearance were produced, and that the day on which Manimēkalai appeared before the pool of Maṇipallavam was that very day and hour. I am inclined to think that Mr Swamikannu Pillai has misunderstood the passages when he takes them to mean that the day and hour when Manimēkalai visited the sacred pool was the very day and hour of the expected readvent of Buddha, exactly 1,616 years after his first appearance. It is in the extract from canto XI that the expression *அநநாளிநநா ளப பொழுதிப்பொழுது* occurs. There is no reference there to Buddha's reappearance in the year 1616. If Divatīlakai intended to tell Manimēkalai that that day Buddha was expected to reappear, she would have in unambiguous terms proclaimed that great and all important fact, and not contented herself with

mentioning merely the miraculous appearance of the sacred bowl. There is no doubt that she is referring to an annually recurring miracle on Vaikāśi Viśāka, which in the very nature of things would be a day of special holiness and significance to the Tamil Buddhists. In this connection reference may be made to Manimēkalai, canto XIV ll 92-94 from which it is clear that when the bowl was thrown into the tank, the bidding was that it should appear on the surface once every year till it should reach the hands of one virtuous and holy enough to take possession of it. The great Tamil scholar, Mahāmahōpādhyāya V Swaminatha Aiyer interprets the context as referring to an annual solemnity, and if I may be permitted to say so in all humility, I perfectly agree with that interpretation. Besides, the notion of Buddha's reappearance in 1,616 years is supplied by the passage extracted from canto XII of Manimēkalai, which describes the heroine's visit to Aravana Adigal, and he conveys the glorious information to her that when Buddha is born again in the year 1616, a new era of universal peace and love and

good-will, which the seer graphically describes, will be heralded. If as a matter of fact the Buddha has already appeared again on the day and at the moment when Manimēkalai obtained the bowl, Aravana Adigal would have told her that the new era had already dawned as the new Buddha was already born, but he does not say anything of the kind, but only makes a prediction. The language is pre-eminently suggestive of an advent yet to happen. It is “பேரறிவாளனோனறு, மதற-பிறபாடு,” “புத்த ஞாயிறு தோன்றுகாலை”

Mr Swamikannu Pillai seems to have put a forced construction on the passages, and thereupon built an argument. If my view supported as it is by the view of the foremost Tamil scholar of the day is correct, it is plain that the passages in Manimēkalai have no relevancy whatever to the discussion of the problem we have taken up for solution. Supposing, however, that Mr Swamikannu Pillai's view of the passages is correct, and their combined effect is to make out that the day of Manimēkalai's visit to the pool was the day of Buddha's expected reappearance, we have to

consider from what date 1,616 years are to be counted, and to which of the three events in Buddha's history, his birth, his sambodhi or his nirvana, the combination of time units refers. Mr Swamikannu Pillai thinks it has reference to Buddha's nirvana, and from that 1,616 years should be reckoned. He rightly holds that none of the accepted dates for Buddha's nirvana would suit, and therefore he assumes 816 B C for his purposes, as that is near what is said to have been the accepted date for the nirvana (B.C. 550) in China in the seventh century after Christ! 1,616 years after 816 B C would take to 771 A D. That being the day when Manimēkalai visited the divine pool and received the divine begging bowl, the epic poem Manimēkalai must have been written not earlier than the eighth century. To arrive at this result Mr Swamikannu Pillai arbitrarily assumes 846 B C as the date of the nirvana that the Southern Tamil Buddhists had in mind, that 1,616 years should be reckoned from the date of the nirvana, expression “ஒரு பதநிலைமே” 6

சென்றபின்” refers to the date of the solar month and that the thithi is not mentioned in the passage, but it is full moon. It is admitted that the expression ‘the middle of the nakshatras’ denotes Visākha, which is the 14th in the list of 27 stars, counting from Kārthikai. Perhaps this very circumstance should indicate that Manimēkalai was composed before the reckoning from Aswini had been substituted. Let that, however, pass. What is the warrant for holding that the alleged Chinese date for the Nirvana had been accepted by the Buddhists of South India? The Tamil Buddhists of South India had no doubt their own traditional dates based on the accounts current in the Tamil country. According to such tradition (1) Buddha’s birth was in Rishabha Wednesday, Visākhanakshatra full moon, and (3) His nirvana was in Rishaba Tuesday, Vaisākha nakshatra, full moon. The northern Buddhists, Weber tells us, had fourteen different accounts of the life events of Buddha ranging from 2422 B.C. to 546 B.C. The southern Buddhists too had possibly a fairly large number ranging over a similarly

long period Accepting Mr. Swamikannu Pillai's suggestion that a date antecedent to 800 B C should be discovered for the purposes of our present problem, we find that the following dates will satisfy the conditions —

1 Birth 1450 B C. Rishabha 7th, Friday, Viśākha nakshatra 30 gh 32 p. full moon 59 gh 18 p

2 Sambodhi 1415 B C Rishabha 10th, Wednesday, Viśākha 8-37, full moon 48-28.

3 Nirvana 1371 B C Rishabha 2nd, Tuesday, Viśāka after 15 gh 46 p and full moon after 15 gh 52 p These dates besides satisfying the conditions regarding the month week day, nakshatra and thithi, also accord with the traditional notion that Buddha attained sambodhi thirty-five years after his birth, and nirvana in his eightieth year These dates are neither improbable nor fanciful Kalhana in his Rajatharanginī places Kanishka 150 years after the nirvana of Buddha, and says that Kanishka and his brothers Hushka and Jushka—the Vasishka and Huvishka of the historians—came immediately before Gonanda who according to him

began his reign in 1182 B C I am not appealing to Kalhana's history, but I refer to him only to show the currency of a tradition about the date of Buddha's nirvana, upon which obviously he based his account of Kanishka's date The date for the nirvana that we might gather from Kalhana's statements that have been noted above will be 1,182 plus 150 plus the period covered by the reigns of Kanishka, Vasishka and Huvishka, which Kalhana says covered one generation, (say, forty years) but which according to Dr Luders is about sixty years This will give us 1372 or 1392 B C. So if we accept these dates the next question would be, from which of these three dates should we reckon 1,616 years to arrive at the rebirth of Buddha To me it is clear that the *terminus a quo* is the date of the sambodhi, which is the real appearance of the Buddha for all Buddhists Calculated from that date, the date of Buddha's anticipated reappearance would be 202 A D, which will also be the date of Manimēkālai's acquisition of the divine bowl."

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSION

As a result of this detailed investigation, it would be of some advantage to gather together in a concluding chapter the results we have so far arrived at in respect of South Indian History. That history does not take us anything like as far back as the history of the Aryans in India. The earliest historical connection is the semi-historical immigration of an Indian colony into Ceylon under the lead of Vijaya. It is this that begins the Buddhist history of the island of Ceylon itself. All that we can say about this is that, at the time this history got to be written, tradition connected Vijaya by marriage with the Pāndyas. That is the only matter of interest to us. The story as it is found in the chronicle might be taken to indicate that there was a considerable intercourse between the island and the Pāndyan country, and that what is said there about the whole-sale transmission of women folk from the Pāndya country



to provide wives for the bachelor immigrants from India may have a substratum of fact. Leaving this we come to the reference that is made by Megasthenes to the female ruler of this Pāṇḍya country, and its resources as indicated by the army that this state usually maintained according to him. These two, though they might have a historical basis, cannot yet be regarded as of undoubted historical character. But when next we pass on and come to the references to this region in the edicts of Asoka, we are certainly on surer ground. The four states that constituted the Tamil country had so far attained to a degree of civilisation and a sufficient development of their resources as to be able to withstand successfully one or more Maurya invasions. We have pointed out in a previous chapter from the evidence of the Tamil classics that there were formidable Maurya invasions, which went as far as the Tinnevely District itself, and left behind it, at least one, possibly more sections of people finally settling in South India. We also pointed out that it was as a consequence of this attempt at conquer-

ing South India in all probability, that the imperial votary for peace, Asoka, thought it prudent to enter into terms of treaty with the southern powers almost on the same footing as the Greek treaty-powers of the west. With the death of Asoka the imperial hold in the more distant provinces becomes loose and the chances of independence were far greater. But the Tamil states took full advantage of this not merely to make themselves independent, but even perhaps to retaliate against the northerners. We found on the facts available that this retaliation perhaps came somewhat later, perhaps after the commencement of the Christian era. It is to this particular period that the bulk of the material available to us from literary sources have reference. From these we are able to picture to ourselves the three well-known states of the south, the Chola, the Pāndya and the Kērala. The space intervening these was occupied by a number of chieftaincies usually seven in number, sometimes more, sometimes less.

Before taking up this period, however, we have to note at least incidents which seem

to us quite historical in the history of Ceylon which bring that island into touch with South India generally and of the Chola country in particular. On the basis of B C 483 for the Buddhist Nivāna, there was a series of Tamil invasions of the island in the course of the second century B C. These invaders are always exhibited in the chronicles as actively hostile to Buddhism. We have already noted that the southern opposition to Mauryan invasion had in it not merely the idea of independence, but perhaps even that of religion in its later phases, and this religious feeling very probably took on the form of hostility to the active extension of Buddhism into the country. In the light of this it is nothing surprising that the Ceylonese complained generally of the hostility of the Hindu invaders of South India to their religion. It is in the reign of the predecessor of Mahāsēna that an unorthodox school of Buddhists in South India are for the first time referred to and this takes us on to very near A D 300. In the course of these invasions, one ruler from the Chola country who is described

as a Tamil 'of a noble descent' came into Ceylon, over-powered the previous ruler and set himself up, on the throne. He is called Elāra in the Ceylon Chronicle and is known to popular Tamil tradition as Ēlēla Śingam. He ruled from 144 B C to 101 B C according to the Chronicle "with even justice toward friend and foe, on occasions of dispute at law". This ruler is sometimes described as from the Karnāta country, as for instance in Miss Mitton's *Ruined Cities of Ceylon*, on what authority, I am not able to say. Returning to Elāra, the stories that the chronicles give of the occasions in which this ruler exhibited his extraordinarily high notions of justice are stories which we find ascribed to an ancient Chola by name Manu Chola, and one of them has quite a family resemblance to the story associated with the great early Chola Karikāla. He is said, on a particular occasion on the complaint of an old woman, who suffered damage to her grain by unseasonal rain, to have brought it about that the rains fell only in due seasons and not otherwise. This is a story quite similar to that of one relating to an early

Pāndyan, who similarly compelled the clouds that ceased to rain to pour forth their abundance. All this which is said in the chronicle in spite of the fact that "he knew not the peerless virtues of the most precious of the three gems (Buddha, Dharma and Sangha)" is a certain indication of a community of culture between the island and the continent. It is a victory over this enlightened usurper that gave great credit, in the eye of the orthodox Buddhists, to one of Ceylon's great patrons of Buddhism Dutta Gāmaṇi Abhaya. His successor got a number of great Viharas constructed, and brought about an assembly, on the occasion of the consecration of one of these, of all the great Buddhists from the various centres in India set forth in Chapter I.

The next occasion in which the history of this island is brought into connection with South India is in the period 44 to 29 B C., when five Tamils established themselves as rulers in succession, and invasions of the island from the Tamil country perhaps became very frequent as the island itself was torn by dissensions and civil wars fre-

quently. When we come to Gaḡabāhu, the Mahāvamśa itself has not much to say about his connection with India, but the other chronicles of Ceylon do state that he found it necessary to go to war, as on a previous occasion the Tamils invaded the island and carried away as many as twelve thousand inhabitants of Ceylon to work "in the city of the Kaveri." This story seems to have relation to the building of the magnificent city of Kaveripattanam or Puhār by the Chola king Karikāla. While there may be much that is historical in this body of Ceylon tradition, we cannot say we are on sure historical ground, but from Karikāla backwards, we have the names of some of the Chola rulers and references to some of their wars in classical Tamil literature itself. The first ruler that we have to notice from this source is Peruvirarkilli, who fought against the Chera Kudakkō Nedum Śēral, and both of them fell in battle. The next rulers of these two dynasties were Ilanjēt-Chenni, the father of Karikāla and Imaiavaramban Nedumśēralādan, the father of Śenguttuvan. Then we get on to

Karikāla in the Chola country, and somewhat later than the date of Karikāla's accession to the throne or even perhaps after his death Śenguttuvan Śēia was the ruler in the Chera country of the west. Between this Chera and his father, there was his uncle who might not have ruled independently, but who did conquer the Kongu country and brought it under Chera rule. This rule was further extended to embrace the Kollimalais when the Malayamān chieftain of Tirukkovilūr, Kāli by name, who was a fugitive in the Chera country as a result of a war against another chief Adiyaman Anji of Tagadūi (Dharmapuri in Salem), volunteered to conquer his enemy-neighbour, Ōri of the Kollimalais, and made over the conquered territory to the friendly Chera who offered him asylum in his difficulties. A successor or subordinate of this Chera laid siege to Tagadūr and destroyed its fortification killing the Anji in battle. This give us three generations of the Cholas, Peruvnark-Killi, his son probably, Ilanjai-Chenni, his son certainly Karikāla. Karikāla was succeeded actually by his son or

grandson known usually as Nedumudik Killi identical with Perunark-Killi, who celebrated the Rājasūyam, with whom this dynasty of the Cholas seems to come to an end, at any rate so far as we can see at present. During the corresponding period, the Chera dominions were ruled respectively by Kudakkō Nedumśēral, then probably his son, Imayavaramban Nedum Śēral, followed by his son Śenguttuvan with a successor who might have been his son or a cousin, the 'Chera of the Elephant Look'. With him the Chera territory suffers considerable damage at the hands of the young contemporary Pāṇḍyan though it recovered partly from this diminution of prestige, but with him our knowledge of the history of the Cheras ceases so far as the particular sources of information under consideration go. Contemporaneous with this the Pāṇḍyan list begins with the Pāṇḍyan Nedum Śēliyan, victor over the Aryan forces, whom for certain valid reasons I identified with Ugra Pāṇḍyan <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I fear this identification may have to be given up, but the alternative course is not yet quite clear. I shall await the results of further analysis of this evidence for a definite conclusion.



His successor was Verri Vēl Śeliyan, who was his father's Viceroy at Korkai. He is succeeded by another Pāndyan, the famous Pāndyan victor at Talaiyālangānam, though we have no information to settle his relationship with his predecessor. This last Pāndyan seems to be followed by another one, who goes by the name Ugiā Pāndya, but under whom some of the Śāngam works, at any rate, got to be collected in their present form. We have already seen that in this age, the country intervening the three kingdoms was divided among a number of chieftains distributed somewhat as follows — Nannan was in occupation of the coast part probably of the Kaḍamba country, that is a great portion of South Canara and part of Malabar on the West Coast. There was an elder Nannan known generally as 'the woman-killer', and his son Nannan, 'the son of Nannan' as the poets called him. Immediately to the east of it, in what is now the territory of Mysore and on this side of the Western Ghats, extended the territories of Irungōvēl of Araiyam, Viḥchik-kōn, and Pāri of Parambu Nāḍu.

Proceeding further eastwards into the Salem district, there was in the region of the Bārāmahals, the Adiyamān chief of Tagadūr (Dhaimapurī), the Adiyaman Anji and his son Elini or Pohuttelini. Further eastwards from this and immediately adjoining his territory was Ōri of the Kollimalais, next east to him in the South Arcot district was the Malayamān Kārī of Tīrukkōilūr and his successor, who figures later, Tīrukkannan, who is called a Malayamān and general of the Cholas (Śoliyavēnādi). Going westwards across this, we come to the famous chieftain of the Palni Hills, Pēhan. South-west of this across the Madura district was Āai of the Podiyil Hills, the Aioi of Ptolemy. Across the whole of Tinnevely on the eastern coast was the great Evvi chieftain of Muttūru Kūrram and Mīlalaik-Kūrram, probably the pearl fishery coast between Korkai and and southern Vellāru. These are the chieftains of the older generation, but by the time we come to the Pāndyan of Talayālangānam, the disposition changes somewhat as we indicated, and those that figured in the battles against him

were slightly different names. That does not mean that they came then into existence, it is only a question of the less important ones becoming more important at the time, the more important ones becoming extinct as in the case of Ori and Pāri, and some of the other chiefs losing their importance. The five chieftains that figured in the great battle of Talaiyālangānam against the young Pāndyan were Tidiyan, Elini, the son of Anji of Tagadūr, Erumaiyūrān, probably the successor of the chieftain who went by the name Erumai, as Māmūlanār knew him, Irungōvēl, and Porunan. This need not exactly be construed as an exhaustive list, as some of the other chieftains of the time might have remained neutral in respect of this particular battle. This gives us a clear distribution of the powers among the various political parties in the age of the Śāṅgam and in the two or three generations of the great literary celebrities, some of whom were considered in detail in the previous chapters and others will come in for consideration when occasion offers.

We have already seen that this part of the country made a combination to resist the incursions of the northerners. We have also noted that they kept communication with the outside world, probably by way of the sea and this communication takes us to times long anterior to the Christian Era. At the age that we have been considering they had probably extensive trade reaching at any rate as far as the East Indian Archipelago on the one side, and perhaps Egypt, Arabia and the Persian Gulf on the other. We have already drawn attention to the great service that was rendered to this over-sea commerce by the destruction, early in this age, of the pirates and their rendezvous close to the west coast of this part of the country. We also suggested that this hostility of the south against the extension of the northern power had perhaps in it something of a hostility to the religious propaganda of the Buddhist Emperor Asoka. That is not to be taken as any hostility to the peaceful following of Buddhism, as we do find Buddhist authors, and some even perhaps of Jain authors.

flourishing about the time and as there is considerable evidence of a knowledge of these systems in the south We need not repeat here what we have already said in respect of the general condition of the country, but we may note that this age gives us, as far as we know, the conditions most favourable, to the institution of the famous Tamil Academy and all the available evidence goes to support this particular inference There is a great deal of work that may usefully be done upon this subject further And now that the necessary preliminary investigation has been carried to the degree of fullness to carry conviction, more work will be done to extract from the material all that may usefully be taken for the building up of the history of this part of the country and of that comparatively remote period

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## ERRATA

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<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>		
27	9	For 'Inscriptionem'	read 'Inscriptionum'
30	13	„ 'advise'	„ 'advice'
42	15	„ Prapannamritram	„ 'Prapannamritam'
59	last line	„ 'unnderstand'	„ 'understand'
62	„	„ 'Valmiki'	„ 'Valmiki'
70	11	„ 'hers'	„ 'here'
86	10	„ 'he'	„ 'be'
94	5	„ कोसलाम्	„ कोसलान्
95	4	„ Nannam	„ 'Nannan'
113	FN	„ 'Maoridle'	„ 'Maorindle'
114	21	„ 'The'	„ 'the'
126	1	„ 'pālī'	„ 'pālai'
133	FN 10	„ 'Mommhen'	„ 'Mommssen'
135	17	For 'to' read 'the' and omit 'of'	
152	19	Omit 'the Appendix on 'and read' (in my Ancient India The Augustan Age of Tamil Literature'	
187	FN 13 1 2	„ 'Kaurajaka	„ 'Kauralaka
188	FN 14	„ 'Kiebhorn	„ 'Kielhorn'
190	17	Omit '2'	
195	FN 16	For 'at'	„ 'of'
206	FN	For 'S'	read 'p'
218	FN 9 1 3	„ 'தேடவணிதை'	„ 'தேடவணிதை'

Page	Line		
220	FN 13 1, 2	„ 'சுட்டி'	read 'சூட்டி'
221	FN 15 1, 2	„ 'பெயுவந்'	„ 'பெளவந்'
„	FN 18 1 1	„ 'சூகிரி'	„ 'சூகிரி'
222	10	„ 'L'	„ 'll'
231	14	For 'Nitravati'	„ 'Netravati'
235	4	Omit by Kapilar'	
236	1	For 'Cheras,'	„ 'Chera's'
243	FN 3 1 4	„ 'போலமகூ'	„ 'பொலமகூ'
245	5	„ 'Vitta'	„ 'Vetta'
253	last line	„ 'every'	„ 'in every',
254	6	„ 'seem'	„ 'seems'
256	last line	„ 'Thapporui'	„ 'Ahapporui'
294	17	„ 'to'	„ 'the'
298	FN 7	„ 'சயவரய'	„ 'சயவரய'
301	last line	„ 'and they'	„ whose inferences
315	FN 16	For Commensuration,	read 'Commemoration'
316	3	„ 'Maturus & Paulus'	„ 'Maternus & Paulus'
317	FN 17 ll 1 & 2	„ 'couch-white'	„ 'couch-white'
318	7	„ 'Diadorus'	„ 'Diodorus'
„	11	„ 'this'	„ 'these'
328	FN 27 1, 6	„ 'kumdalakrtih'	„ 'lundalakrtih'
334	16	„ 'Silpathikaram'	„ 'Silappathikaram'
336	5 from foot	„ 'Ghatikar'	„ 'Ghatikas'
340	10	„ 'ense,	„ 'ence'

# INDEX.

*The numbers in the index refer to the pages of the book.*

## A

- Aay* (Aioi of Ptolemy,) 127, 152,  
 153, 202, 122, 147  
*Aay Eyyinan*, Ohera C in Chief  
 193, 217, 238  
*Abdur Razak*, 17, 149.  
*Abhira* 116  
*Adan Ungan*, 92  
*Adigaman of Tagadur*, 198, 198,  
 9, 201, 202, 236  
*Adigan*, 238  
*Adi Mandi*, story of, 196,  
*Adiyarkkunnallar* 172  
     commentary on S, 331  
     note to it, in consistent  
     and impossible details,  
     335 6  
*Adiyars*, Saiva Saints, 45  
*Agastya*, Sage 63, 87 105  
*Agenor*, 105  
*Ahananurn*, 185, 192, 196  
*Ahavamalla*, 101.  
*Aingurunru*, 192  
*Ajatasatru*, 101  
*Akalavarsha*, 101.  
*Alexander of Epirus*, 70  
*Alexander the Great*, 104, 158  
*Alexandrinus*, Paulus, 345  
*Alyasantanam Law*, or *Matrinar*  
*ohate*, 73  
*Amitraghata*, 101  
*Antiochus*, 70  
*Anamalai Inscriptions*, 179, 180,  
 262  
*Ananta aya*, 42  
*Anubras*, 63, 96, 103, 209  
     *Empire*, 116,
- Imperial position explained*,  
 109  
*Antigonns Gonatas*, 70, 105  
*Aparanta*, 74, 76  
*Appolodotus*, 116  
*Appaiya Dikshita* the great S  
     Ind Scholar and philosopher,  
     commentary on *Yadava-*  
*bhndayam*, 48  
     contemporary of *Doddaya-*  
     *charya* and *Rama Rava*,  
     49  
*Appar*, 203  
*Appolonius of Tyana*, 16  
*Arayam of Irungo Vel*, 235  
*Arattas*, 117  
*Archaeology*, conservation of  
     monuments, preliminary to,  
     19  
     help to history, little scope  
     for private work, 20  
     its gradual expansion in  
     India, 20, 21  
     reaching far back, 34  
     dependence of history on, 36  
*Archaeology and Epigraphy*,  
     impossibility of private work  
     in, 36 only dry bones to his  
     tory, 58  
*Argartio* 123  
*Argam (Periplus)*, *Urattur*, 121.  
*Arriaca of Ptolemy*, 115, 119  
     pirate coast, 147, 230  
*Arikesarin Maravarman*, 256  
*Arnavarai* (Tamil *Arnavalar*),  
 125



- Arrian, 16, 68.  
 Arsil Kilar, 195, 216, 238.  
 Arthasastra, see Chanakya  
 Aryabhatta, 305  
 Aryan Invasions, 96.  
 Aryan land, 102  
 Aryas, 97.  
     defeat by Malayaman, 98  
     victory over, 99  
 Arvaputta, 82  
 Asmaka, 65  
 Asoka, 102, 107  
     Buddhist Emperor, 106  
     Rook Edicts of, 69, 74  
     Edicts at Sidadhapura,  
     Brahmagi Maski etc, 81  
     96, 112, 207.  
     Ref to the 8 in, 350  
     Kalinga war, his territorial  
     extension, 207  
 Attakathas, or Arthakathas, 79  
 Attanattai, story of, 196  
 Attirayanar, Kallil, 91, 92  
 Augustus, 146 149  
     deified 170  
 Avantī, 66  
 Avvaiyar, poetess, 198  
 Ayirai fort, 226

## B

- Babylonia intercourse with, 114  
     communication with India,  
     330  
     Zodiacal arrangement, 318  
     System of astronomy as  
     tropical and seasonal,  
     318  
     Traditions, 312—3 5  
     System of astrology, basal  
     idea, 322  
 Bacara or Bakarai, or Vaik-  
     karai, 119, 147  
 Bactria, 108  
 Bactrians, 117  
 Balita & Janardhanam, 121  
 Bana, author of Harsha chari-  
     tram, 13  
 Banavasi or Vanavasa, 74, 76,  
     78

- Barbarionum, 115  
     perhaps the same Barbaraka-  
 Barygaza, 102, 118 120  
 Barnkaohaha or Broach, 115.  
 Bator (Tamil Vettuvār), 122  
 Batntah, Ibn, 17, 149  
 Bhandarkar, Sir R G 65—67,  
 Bharatavenba of Peruudevanar,  
     282 diff from Bharatan of P  
 Bhasa, dramatist, 65, 317  
 Bilhana, author of Vikramanka-  
     deva charitam, 13  
 Bindusara, 85, 86, 107, 207,  
     208  
     Amitraghata, 101  
 Bombay Sanskrit Series, model  
     of critical work in Sanskrit,  
     50  
 Brhatkatha, Paisaohi work, 54,  
     56, 153  
 Brhatkathamansari, 54  
 Brown, Mr Robert, 315  
     Author of Primitive Cons-  
     tellations, 322, 328, 318  
     On the fixing of the zodiac  
     by the Babylonians, 326  
     327.  
 Bucephalus, 117  
 Buddha, date of, 342—348  
 Buddhism, Mahayanist, im-  
     portance of bhakti oh III  
     Madhyamika school, 111  
     Constantine of the Maha-  
     yana form, 110  
     Its decay, 111  
     South Indian hostility to,  
     99  
 Buddhist Jatakas, 64—65  
 Buddhist, Nirvana, 79  
 Burgess, 20  
 Byzantine Emperors, 150

## C

- Casertae (Periplus), 280  
 Caldwell, Bishop on the Augus-  
     tus age of Tamil Lit, 161—2  
     His theory restated, 164  
 Camara, identified with Kaveri  
     pattanam, 123

Caracalla, 150, 151, 155  
 Cassius Dio 306  
 Caus, Emperor, 122  
*Ceylon*, semi histl immigration  
 into, intercourse with the  
 Pandyan Country 349  
 Tamil invasions of, 352—  
 354  
 Asoka's diplomatic rela-  
 tions with, 112  
 Chronicles of, 79, 80, 146  
 Chanakya's Arthashastra, 68—  
 9, 85  
 Chandler, Rev J S 297  
*Chandra gupta*, 73 85, 100, 102,  
 106, 107, 158, 207  
 Chalukyas rise of, 155  
 Charlemagne 152  
 Chinese Empire, 110  
 Cherabothra, Keralaputra, 119,  
 128  
 Cheras 63  
*Chera* achievements, 151  
 Chera ascendancy, 130  
 the, of the elephant look  
 131, 245, 246  
 Chersonesus golden, 134  
 Chintamani, 162 172  
*Cholas*, 63, 69 116  
 Their kingdom at the dawn  
 of the Xian era, 127 et seq  
 their 1st supremacy 129  
 Three generations of, 356  
 Chronology, 1st essential to  
 history 44  
 Ceylon country, 76, 124 island,  
 120  
 Cicero, on the 1st law of history,  
 3  
 Olive and Watson 149  
 Colonial name of the large  
 vessels of the Tamils, 124,  
 Constantine Emperor, 306  
 Cook, Mr Stanley A on the  
 defects of specialistic research,  
 183—4  
 Cornelius Nepos, 113  
 Corpus Inscriptionum Indica

rum, one of Fleet's two desi-  
 derata, 27  
 Cowell on Indian Chronology  
 4  
 Cunningham, Gel 20  
 Sir Alexander, author of  
 Inscriptions of Asoka, 27  
 Curtius, Quinctus, 16

## D

Dakshinapatha (Dachir-  
 nabades Gk) change of nota-  
 tion, 59, 60, 101, 102, 112, 118  
 Damirica or Dramidaca, 119,  
 120, 123, 134  
 Dandakaranya (Tamil Dan-  
 daranyam), 62, 63, 101, 118,  
 128  
 Dandi, 54  
 Dantivarman Pallava, not  
 Vairameghan, 47  
 D'Ely Mont, 231  
 Deva Raya I, 17  
 Dharmasutra Apastamba 320  
 Dhruva, story 323—4  
 Star, pole star, 324  
 Diodorus' resume of Baby-  
 lonian astrology, 318  
 Digambara Darsana, a Jain  
 work, 189  
 Diadohi, 105  
 Dipavamea, 79  
 Dinnaga, 52  
 Dosarene or Dasarna, 125  
 Dravida Sangam, 189, 190  
 Duttagamani Abhaya, great  
 patron, 77  
 of Buddhism, 354

## E

Elara or Elela Singam his high  
 notions of justice, 353  
 Elimalai, of Nannan, Saptasala,  
 Mont'eley of mediaeval  
 writers, 93

- Elliot Sir Walter, 28.  
 Elphinstone on Indian chronology, 4  
 Epigraphy 10, 19  
   its special imp. for S. Ind His, 22  
   its wide range, 23, 24  
   its value, 24, 5 34  
 Eras Indian, 25  
 Erlinon (Rann of Cutch), 115  
 Erumaiyuran or Erumai, chieftain of Kudanadu, 97  
 Eudamos Philip's Successor, 105  
 Eukratides, 108  
 Eumenes, 105  
 Evans T C on the condition of S. India, 155  
 Evi Chieftain 127, 202, 236, 288.

## F

- Fa Hien, Chinese traveller, 16 186  
 Fleet Dr 86, 101, 153, 188  
   the greatest authority on Ind Epigraphy, 23, 4  
   his two desiderata for Ind Historical Research, 26, 2  
   his Gupta Inscriptions, 27  
   his identification of Mahishas Mandala, 97  
   his theory about the use of week-days in India, 303 308  
 Frazer, 168

## G

- Gajsbahu, King of Ceylon, 131, 153, 171, 172, 175, 210  
   his synchroism, 209  
 Gandharas, 70, 71  
 Gangakonda, 101.  
 Gangas, 128  
 Gangooly, O C, author of S Indian Bronzes, 28 29.

- Geiger's Mahavamsa, 76  
 Gnimili, Nannan's Cin Chief, 217  
 Goodspeed Prof author of a history of the Babylonians and Assyrians about the astronomical knowledge of the Sumerians, 325  
 Gopinatha Rao, author of Hindu Iconography, 29  
 Govinda Raja, image taken from Chidamaram to Tirupati 37 the history of the temple of, 37-44  
 Greek Sources, failure after the time of Asoka, 15  
 Gunadya, 163.  
 Guptas Imperial, their rise, 107, 155  
 Gurjjaras, 187.  
 Guruparamparais, 87

## H

- Hammurabi Pantheon, 312  
 Harper Prof. 325  
 Harsha, 113  
 Hastivarman of Vengi, 188  
 Havell, author of Ancient Medieval Architecture, 29  
 Hemadri, 52  
 Herodotus, Father of History '5.  
 Hindu Astronomy Borrowed from the W i Dr Fleet's view 305, 311  
   Jastrow's 324, absence of evidence for this contention, 330  
   its basis not chronological, 329, but astrological, 320  
   its similarity to Babylonian and Sumerian notions, 327, 329  
   if borrowed, more probably from Babylonia than from the christian astronomers of the E. E. Re-

ferences to, in vedic Literature, and Ramayana

Hinduism, re-assertion of, 110

*Historical Research Indian*, Requisites, organised study of Sanskrit and the Dravidian languages, and critical editions of various works, 49, 58, 35, 6

fixing of dates of works of authors essential 49

Co operation indispensable but easy, 31

touch with archaeological epigraphical and literary work essential, 50

Collation of various kinds of sources necessary, 27

*History of Hindu India*, little explored, 3

application of Morley's conception of history to the 3, 4

want of chronology, the complaint of Elphinstone and Cowell, 4

want of provision for the study of, in Oxford pointed out by Hutton, 56

demand of a permanent chair for, by Stubbs, 8

and its non fulfilment, 9

Indications of the interest evoked by sympathetic study of Indian Art 28

munificence of public bodies, 29, 30

Sources for, and their value, 10 25, 34

*History*, fable agreed upon, 1 14

what it is, Morley's view, 1, 2

Cicero's dictum, 3

necessity for a permanent chair of, 8

its modern tendency lengthening, widening and deepening, 30 31,

*Its study*, needs for, Prof Martland's view, short comments of, 2, 3

insight and imagination necessary, 3

the tendency to read thoughts and feelings into the past, an obstacle to it

*Hsien Tshang*, 16, 17 187,

Hinng nn, 108

Hnlizech Dr 23

Hutton, Rev Williams Holden, on limiting the Oxford chair for Indian History to the History of British connection with India

Hyderabad Archaeological Series 81

# I

Iampnranar, commentator 253

Ilanagan Marndan, 244, 251

commentary on Irayanar Ahapornl

Ilandirayan Tondaman, 202

Ilangiran Porundil celebrating the Chera of the elephant look 246

Iango author of Silappadikaram, 287

Ilangosar Kongn, 197

Ilanjet Chera Chola King, 95 98, 215, 234

Imayavaramban Perum Seral Adan, 98.

Indian Caucasians, 104

Indian Literature, paucity of professed histories, 33

rational and system study necessary to yield good results, 5, 7, 8

Indrajit, son of Ravana, 321

Innes Mr L C on the age of Manikkavasagar 164,

Ion of the Obios, 323

Irayanar Ahapornl, 3rd section of Classical Tamil Gr 5 car,

Commentary on it of Nar  
kirar and Ilanagan, 249,  
261.

Irungo of Arayam, 126, 201

## J

Jataka, Bavaru, 114

Jatilavarman Pandya, son of  
Maravarman, 257  
his plates, 179

Jastrow Prof., author of *Reli-  
gious Beliefs etc in Babylonia  
and Assyria*, 312

an Assyriologist, on the  
basal ideas of Indian as-  
tronomy borrowed from  
Greece, 324

Jivaka Chintamani, 173

Jouveau Dubreuil Prof. author  
of *South Indian Architecture  
and Iconography*, 29

## K

Kachcha, 65.

Kadambas, a pirate race, 232  
their destruction, 224

Kadava defeat at Ponnagadam,  
258

Kadungon, 268

Kalabhra Interregnum, 182,  
258

Kalahm (Burma), 114

Kalangaykkanni, Nannan's  
enemy, 232

Kalattalaiyar, 195, 215, 235,  
238

Kalhana his *Rajatarangini*, 18  
about Kanishka and his  
successors, 347

Kalidasa, his *Meghaduta*, 62  
his date according to W  
Scholars, 309

his distinction bet nak  
shatra, tara and graha,  
308

Kalinga, 63, 66

Asoka's conquest of, 85  
Cotton fabrics of, 69

Kalladanar, 192, 365, 238

to his ref Ori's death and  
the battle of Alanganam,  
244

his commentary on Tol  
kappiyam, 249

Kalvar Koman Pulli, 185

Kambar, prince of poets, 46.

Kambojas, 70, 71

*Kanakasabai Pillai Mr* 119,  
126, 163, 173, 185, 225

his identification of Nuran-  
gannan, 171, 175, 177

his two mistakes, 295

*Kanarese*, language, not the  
elder sister of Tamil, 293

its literature more ancient  
than Telugu lit, 35

Kanchi, occupation of, by the  
Chalukyas 272, by the  
Pallavas, 208

by Vairamegha, 47

Kanchipuram, 66

Kanishka, the Constantine of  
Mahayana, Bud, 110 56

Kannaki, the heroine of S 163,  
170

story of, 176

her course 332

Kannaki, Pehani's wife, 216

Kannan Kumatur, poet 309

Kapilar poet 185 195, 216, 235,  
238, 246

Karcot, (Tamil Karaiyar), a  
fisher folk, 123

Kari, king of Mullur, 197, 199.

Kari of Tirukkottur, 202, 237,  
238

Karikala Chola, 51, 95, 99, 129,  
171 175, 185, 195, 234, 238

Karikkanan, 244

Kariyar, Victory, 130

Kartavirya, Arjuna, 97

Karusa, 66

Kataha (Sumatra) 113

Kathavaritsagara, of Somadeva,  
54, 57

Katyayana's Vartika, his expln  
of Pandya, 66

Kaveripatam, 125.

- Kavirajamarga, a Kannarese  
 work on poetics, 35  
 Kennedy J., 114  
 Kerala, 112, 66 73, 69  
 Kern, Prof. author of Manual  
 of Bin 111  
 Kharavela, Kalinga ruler, 109  
 Kielhorn Prof 29, 188  
 Kilar, Idankunrur, 195 244  
 Kilar, Perungunrur, 195  
 Killi, Peruvirai, 231  
 Kishkinda, mod Hampe 61  
 Kodubur fortification, 219  
 Koinos, Cavalry Commander, 104  
 Koli, renewal of the Walls of by  
 Rajasimha, 259  
 Kollimalais Capture of by Kari  
 for Ori and the gift of it to the  
 Chera, 244 245  
 Kollipavai 217 196  
 Kongu country, 128  
 Kongudesa Rajakkal, 13  
 Konkanum, Tululand, 84, 93  
 Korkoi, 121 127  
 Korrannar, Idayan Sendan, 95  
 Kosala, 66  
 Kosar (Kongilangosar) a War  
 like people, 85, 68 91, 92 93,  
 94, 197 198, 201  
 entry into the Kongu coun-  
 try, 218  
 Kovalan, 168  
 Kovalan and Kannaki, departure  
 from Kaveripattanam, 331  
 Krimikanta, a persecuting  
 Chola, 38, 43  
 Krishna Raya, 13 48  
 Krishna, Sage, 111.  
 Krishna Sastry Rai Sahib H.,  
 24  
 Ktesias, 16  
 Kudakko Nedum Sornaladan, 195  
 Kudal renewal of the walls of,  
 by Rajasimha, 259  
 Kudarp Parandalai, 239  
 Kulach Chirai, 278  
 Kulasekhara Alvar, 39  
 Kulottunga Chola I, his death  
 the beginning of Chola  
 decline, 40  
 Kulottunga Chola II, 40, 48  
 Kulottunga Cholanula, 41  
 Kulumbur, Pallava defeat at,  
 258  
 Kumarasami, Dr A K., 145  
 Kumaratatarya, 49.  
 Kumari, 121  
 Kumbhalarna, the Amitrabha  
 tin of Ramayana, 101  
 Kuz Pandya, patron of the  
 Sangam, according to Perla-  
 puranam, 256  
 Kuntala, ancient, 82  
 Kural of Tiruvalluvar, 93  
 Kurumtegai, 93, 96, 192, 197  
 Kushanas, 110,  
 their fall, 155  
 Kutta Nadu, 120  
  
 L  
 Lang Mr. author of Custom and  
 Myth, 323  
 Lallur M., 123  
 Lucers, Dr, 346  
 Lymirici, 119  
  
 M  
 Macdonnell, Prof., 6  
 Macedonian Empire, 105  
 Machetas, 105  
 Mackenzie, Donald A., author of  
 Myths of Baby and Assyria,  
 315  
 on the Baby astro Sys., 318  
 319  
 comment of, 325 6  
 Mackenzie, Mrs., 11  
 Macrinde, 118  
 Madhyadesa, 62  
 Madras Museum plates of  
 Jatilavarman, 179, 257  
 Madura Academy Secd, 86, 103,  
 238  
 Madura, destroyed by fire,  
 332  
 Madura Ma  
 Alvar  
 Mar

- Magas of Cyrene, 70  
 Mahabharata, Dakshinapatha limited to Dehnanin, 59.  
 Mahacharya, Doddacharya 43, 44, 48, 49  
 Mahamatras, 140  
 Mahanaman, a Sthavira monk, 79.  
 Maharatha, defeat at Mangala puram, 258  
 Mahasena, 79  
 Mahavamsa, 74, 80, 86, 112, 130, 209, 210  
 Mahendravarman, 273  
 Mahishmati or Mandhata, 61, 63, 66, 74 76 97  
 Maitland, Prof. on the need for histl. Study, 30, 31 53  
 Malabathrum, 120 131  
 Malayalam, Grown out of Tamil, 83  
 Malayaman Chief of Mullur, 96, 98, 127  
 Mallinatha, Commentator, 52,  
 Malloi, 105  
 Mambarus, perhaps Lambodara of the Puranas, 116  
 Mamulanar, 83, 84, 86, 90, 93, 97, 98, 103, 185, 186 187, 189, 201, 203 238  
     of the Agastya family, ref. to the invasion of the S 87 Contemporary of Karikala and Nannan 87  
     elder contemporary of Paravar, 87  
     ref. to the Mauryas, 207.  
     ref. to the battle of Vennil, about the Chera's achievement ag the pirates 235  
 Manakkilli, Chola princess, 218.  
 Managara port, 147  
 Mangayark—*ka r a s r*, Pandya queen, ref. to by Sambandar, 278 279  
 Manikkavasagar, 38, 40  
     his date not settled, 45, 46  
     age of, 164  
 Manimekhalai, 137, 154, 168, 172 175, 178, 192  
 Manta Raja Kanralaka, 187, 188  
     Wrongly identified with Mandaram Seral, 187—8, 206  
 Mantaram Seral, 245  
 Manu Chola, 253  
 Maradam, 187  
 Maran Kari, 181, 180  
     identification with Madurakavi impossible  
 Marco Polo, 17, 93  
     on the pirate coast, 148-9  
 Maravarman, Termaran, associated in Literature with 16 titles and 14 battles with no ref. to a Pallava, 266—7, 258  
 Marudan, Mangudi poet of the Pandyan Court, 142 242, 243  
 Marudur, battle of, 258  
 Masalia, 125  
 Maternus Firmicus, 205  
 Mauryas 90 93 96 99  
     war with Palayan Maran, 185, 7  
     their army, 92, 95  
     their Empire overthrown by Pushyamitra, 109  
     their invasion of South India, 93 102, 100, 189, 206, 203  
     their decline, 209  
 Megasthenes, 16  
     on the Pandya country, 67, 68, 328, 250  
 Menander, ruler of Kabul 109, 118  
 Matellius Celer, 113  
 Mignili war with, 196, 198  
 Minnagara City of the Scythians, 115  
 Mithridates Arsakes I, 107  
 Mitton, Miss, authoress of the ruined cities of Ceylon 358  
 Mohur, Chief of, 185 206  
 Mommsen, 133,  
 Moniyar or Oriyar, 92

Morley, Lord, on history, 12,  
on the shortcomings of histl  
study, 28  
Mousikanos, 105  
Mudattamakanniya 215  
Mudavanar, Iyur, 244  
Mudukudumi, Pandya Raja  
dhi Raja, 227, 258  
Muhurta Darpana, 308 9  
Muller, Max, 145  
Murtinayanar, story of, 182  
Muttra, antiquities of, 109  
Muziris, Muziri (mod Cran-  
ganore), 119, 120, 134, 135, 147  
195, 230

N

Nachchinarkkiniyar, 87, 173  
Nagarjuna, 54, 111.  
Nagas, 134  
Nahapann, Kshaharata ruler,  
117  
Nalli, 198,  
Nambanus, kingdom of, 115,  
116, 117  
Nambiyandar Nambi, ref of,  
to the Sangam, 281, 275  
Nammalvar, 45, 46  
Nandas, 106, 181, their enor-  
mous wealth, 89  
Nandivarman Pallavamalla, last  
great Pallava, 47 273  
Victor at Tallaru, 282  
Nannan the woman killer, 84,  
85 87, 88, 93, 128, 197, 198,  
199, 217, 232, 238, his City,  
228,  
his fort, 196  
his vast wealth, 217  
his kingdom, Konkanam,  
217  
Narasimhaachar Mr R 24  
Narasimha Pallavamalla, 183,  
203  
Narayanaswami, Iyer Mr  
Pinnathur, ed. (1911)  
Narriuai), 192

Narkirar 185, 247  
his refs to Pari and Eru  
mai, 247, 248  
a member of the Sangam,  
248  
his commentary on Irai  
yanar Ahapporul the  
most approved, 289 and  
251  
Narrinai, 93, 96, 192, 196, 197,  
283  
Nattan, Nallur, 195  
Nedumaran, Pandyan Victor,  
at Nolveli, importance of his  
identification to Tamil Liter-  
ary History, 255  
Nedum Jadayan, Jatila, donor  
of the Madras Museum and  
Sinnamanur plates, 258,  
Nedum Jadayan, Pandyan, 98  
171, 175, 209  
Nedumjadyan, Jatila, Parai-  
taka, donor of the Velvikudi  
grant, 258  
Nedum Seraladan, (Oera King  
Senguttuvan) 215, 218  
Imayavaramban, 235, 234,  
238  
Nolveli, battle of, 255.  
Arikasari Varman's 278.  
Udayachandran's, 274,  
ref to in later literature,  
Periapuranam, 273 76,  
Nero, 150  
Neruvati river, 231  
Nicolo dei conti, 17  
Nilakantan of Musiri, 253.  
Ninevah Archives, recent dis-  
covery in, and the comments  
of MacKenzie D A and Bayce  
325, 326  
Nirukuram, mod form of  
Noloynda, 115  
Nishada Chief  
Nir (Na



Numismatics, largely private work so far, 21  
 invaluable for particular periods of history 22  
 Nuniz, 17  
 Nurrangannan, 171, 175, 177

## O

Ori of Kollimalais. 128, 201, 217, 238,  
 his defeat, 196  
 his death, 197 237  
 Oriental, Miss Library, 91  
 Ottakknttan, poet 40  
 Oviaseenan, 172, 177  
 Owen, Mr Sidney, Reader of Ind His in Oxford, 8  
 Oxyartes, 105  
 Oxydrachoi, 105  
 Oxykenos, 105  
 Ozene (Ujjain) 118

## P

Paddirruppattu, 98, 102, 168, 192, 199, 205  
 Paee, 17  
 Paisaohi, 54  
 Paitan, 118  
 Palaesimnndu, 125  
 Palayan Maran, 187, 206, 219  
 Pali, Nannan's hill-fort, 95, 196, 196, 217  
 its destruction, 98  
 Pali, Literature, its service to the history of Ancient India, 37  
 Pallava *Bhanyana*, 258  
 Pallavamalla, 274  
 defeat of, 258  
 Pallavas, 203  
 their rise 180, 155  
 the age of the 183  
 their accession to power 271  
 the great, of Kanchi 273  
 not referred to by the Sangam Works, 182  
 defeat at Kulumbur and Sankaramangai 258

Pandya Kavatum (K a v a t a pnam) 63  
 not a mountain but the Cape, 68  
 Pandyas, 68, 69, 112  
 their kingdom, extension of, 127  
 their county 78  
 twelve years famine in, 250  
 reference to, 360  
 their ascendancy, 180, 191 2  
 Panini, the grammarian, 65-7  
 Papyrus, a Gk farce, 293  
 Param Korranar, 91  
 Paranar, Sangam poet 85 91, 98 185, 198, 195, 198, 199 202, 205, 238, age of, 211 289  
 Contemporary of Kari, ori, Evvi and Adigaman 236 7  
 refs mostly to the Cholas and Cheras 234  
 his Voluminous works, 214  
 political divisions of his age  
 199 political circumstances  
 208 ref to Tal Pandyan 239  
 Parantaka I, Chola King, 181, 261  
 Parimelalagar's, commentary on Kural, 251 2  
 Pari of Parambunad, 201  
 friend of Kapilar, 247  
 Parapanisadae, Ind viceroyalty of Alex 105  
 Parthians, 107  
 their indepos 107  
 their Empire, 110  
 Pasungudayar, Unpoai, 95  
 Pataliputra, destruction of, 186 189  
 excavations in, 23  
 Patanjali, 66, 7  
 Pattinappalai, dedicated to Karikala, 51, 125 126, 186 7  
 Pattini devi, 131, 145 209, 210  
 Pattinppattu 167 8 167, 192  
 Paulina Lolha wife of the Emperor Oarus 122, 3  
 Pax, a comedy of Aristophanes, 323

- Pehan chieftain 128, 199, 202,  
     215, 234, 238  
     his liberality 195  
 Peithon, Viceroy 105  
 Pinches, Prof about Mars 313  
 Pindan, 198  
 Pennagadam, de f e s a t a t and  
     destruction of 258  
 Perdiccas, 105  
 Periapuram, 182, 183, 276,  
     on the existence of the Sangam  
     256.  
 Perseus of the Erythraean Sea,  
     17, 102, 115, 115, 116, 117,  
     119, 121, 122, 123 126, 146,  
     156 8, on the piratical west  
     coast 229, 146, on 8 Ind  
     exports, 134 5  
 Periyar, Chera river 222, 226  
 Perunjattan, 245  
 Perundevanar, 174 194  
     rather a common name,  
     289  
     Bharatavenba 282  
     Bharatampadiya, 235  
 Perundurai port, 198  
 Perungunrur Kilar, 216, 238  
 Peruvialudi, Palyagasali Pandya,  
     181, 2  
 Peruvirarkkuli 195, 199, 216,  
     245  
 Petronius, 132  
 Peutingerian Tables, 146,  
     148, 151, 233  
 Philip, viceroy, murder of, 105  
 Pidayan, ridiculous identifica-  
     tion with Palavan 189  
 Pitonikas 70, 72.  
 Pliny, geographer, 16, 146, 151,  
     on piracy 147, 229  
     on the drain from the  
     Roman Empire into  
     India 133  
     on the luxuries of Roman  
     ladies, 123-3  
 Plutarch 322  
 Podiyil Hill, 90, 93, 100  
     farthest limit of Mauryan  
     invasions 87  
     defeat at, by the Kosar 88  
 Poduoa, 123  
 Porus, 105  
 Prapannamrtam 42  
 Priyadarasin king, see Asoka,  
 Ptolemy, astronomer and geo-  
     grapher 16, 114, 115, 119, 121,  
     122 12 5, 146, 147, 151, 172  
     280  
     his age synchronous with the  
     Chera ascendantoy 159  
 Ptolemy II Philadelphus 70  
     107, 110  
 Pudukkotta state 73  
 Puhar, the emporium of the  
     East its destruction 129  
     festivals at, 146  
 Puhlat corruption of Palavark-  
     kadu, 83  
     limit of Aryan land, 96  
 Pulindas, 60,  
 Pulli of Vengadam 128  
     chieftain of Tirupati, 197  
 Pundras, 63  
 Pural, Coasts, 121  
 Purananuru, 167, 174, 152,  
     194, 198  
 Puranas, 103  
     oldest, 63  
 Pushyamitra Sunga, 109  
     his triple war, 109

R

- Raghava Aiyangar, Pandit M.,  
     his life of Senguttuvan, 166,  
     184—185  
     on the Sangam period, 203  
 Rahulabhadra, 111  
 Raja Raja II, 40, 48  
 Raja Rajanula 41  
 Rajasimha I, defeat of Pallava  
     malla, renewal of the walls of  
     Kudal, Vanji and Koli, 258  
 Rajasimha II, 258  
 Rajasimha III, 258, 261  
 Rajavallikathe, 14

Ramanuja, the reconstruction of the life of, on the possibilities of historic research in Tamil Literature, 87 et seq

his life, contained in Prapannamrtam,

Rama Raya, 43, 44, 48 49

Ramayana (Kamban's), 46

Ramayana, (Valmiki's), 61, 63, 94, 101

astrological belief in the, 321, 322

Ramayana and Mahabharata, chronological difficulties connected with, 64

Ranadhira, 258

Rangaswami Aiyangar, 192.

Rashtikas, 70-2

Rice, Mr., of the Epigraphia Carnataka, 24

Roman Commerce, 149 to 150  
decline of, owing to change of political conditions, 151

Romans, 107

Rost, Reinold, echoing the Old welian tradition, 162

Roxane, wife of Alexander, 105

Rudrasarman, believed to have made the Ahananuru collection, 285

## S

Saddharma pundarika, founder of a school of Buddhism, 111

Sahadeva, march into the Pandya country, 60

Sakas, 109

the era called after them, 108, 110, 111

Sambandar, Tirugnana, 203, 205

Samudragupta, 206

Sangam Tamil, of Madura, probable origin, 142

the age of, the Augustan Age of Tamil Lit., 165

the best period of activity 2nd and 3rd cens, 286

Paranar, a celebrity con-

ected with, 213

Narkirar, an eminent member of, and Tal Pand associated with, 284

ref to in the larger Sinna manur plates, 282

distribution of political power during, 355 to 360

*Sangam works* their contemporary value, 191-4

absence of ref to the Pallavas in, 182

their chronology discussed, 161 to 210

Sangara Periplus' name for the smaller vessels of the Tamils, 124

Sankaramangai, defeat of the Pallavas at, 258, 273

Sanskrit indispensable for Ind Histl Research, 35

Satagoparandadi, 45

Satakarni, 185

Satakarni Yagnasena, 109

Satavahanas, their disappce, 116 155

their records, 34

Satyauputra, mentioned in Asoka edicts, 112

Sattan, author of Manimekhalai, 214, 267

Satynacharya, 327

Savaham, 113

Sayce Prof, on observatories in Babylonia 326

Scheifner 85

Schoff W H, 102, 114

on the condition of S Ind, 156

his identification, 231

Seleucus Nicator, 73

his treaty with Chandragupta 100, 102, 106, 107

Seliyan Sendau, identification with Tal Pand, not proven, 204, 268

Seuguttuvan, the Red Chera, 130, 126, 204, 210, 213, 214, 217, 218, 219

- Senguttuvan his life by Raghava Aiyangar, 166  
his age, 165, 185
- Seraman Nedum Seralaan, 169
- Sesha Aiyar, K. G., on the astronomical data of S & M, 331 to 348
- Sewell, his conclusions about the find of Roman coins, 149 to 151.
- Shama Sastry, translator of the Arthasastra, 68
- Silappadikaram & M., their historical value, 201 to 5 & 209 & 10  
chronological data of 291  
quotations from, in I Ahapporul, 293  
astronomical data discussed, 174 to 5 and 331 to 48
- Simha Vishnu, 273
- Sinnamauur plates, 167, 179  
181, 257 and 282
- Sita on Rama being turned into a star, 321
- Smith, Vincent A., author of the Early History of India, and History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon, 4 and 39.  
the former a vindication of the possibility of a connected His of Ind., 4  
on the S frontier of Asoka's Empire, 82 3
- Somadeva, sarith Kasbmerian, his Kathasagara, 54 6
- South India, a distinct entity in Indian History, Chap I, Mauryan invasion of, Chap II, fairly well known to the N by the time of Patanjali, 67  
its commercial condition, 113 to 126  
its internal condition political and incl 126 to 137  
apparently out of the vortex of political and religious changes taking place elsewhere, 112
- the seven chieftaincies, bone of contention between Cholas and Cheras, 127 8, 238
- principal ports and roads, 138 9
- royal power 139, to 142  
religious toleration and happy confusion, 143 to 146  
its ideal of justice, 148 3.
- T. C. Evans and W. H. Schoff on, 155—6  
its stand against the Gks, 158  
its peace ideals, 158 to 160
- Speyer, Prof Dutch scholar, 54, 154
- Ssu ma sh'ien, Chinese Father of history, 16
- Strabo, 146
- Stubbs Bishop, Regius Prof of Mod His Oxford, on the need for a permanent chair of India history, 8
- Subramania Aiyer, K V extracts from, 167—174  
his incapacity to appreciate different mental attitudes, 205
- Sugriva, description of the S 61 to 63, 94
- Sumorians, their notions concerning the moon, 311
- Sundaram Pillai, his milestones in Tamil Lit., 163
- Sundaramurti Nayanar, 45
- Sundara (Kun) Pandya, 203
- Sungas, their fall, 103
- Suvarnabhumi, 75, 76
- Suvarnagiri 82
- Swamikannu Pillai Dewan Bahadur, on the date of S and M, 172 to 174  
on their astronomical data, 290—348 *passim*  
the unbroken tradition of annotation connected with them, 335.

*Swaminatha Aiyar*, Mahamahopadhyaya, his remarkably well edited Tamil works of Literature, 50 to 51

## T

Tagara, 119

Takkayagapparan, 42.

Talayalanganam battle, 182, 282  
description of by, Narkirar, 247

and Mangudi Marudan, 244

*Pandyan Victor of*, 131,  
140 to 142 196, 239,

age of, Chap VI, date of, 281

identification with Sendan Seliyan, 204

Talikota, battle of, 48

Tambapanni, ref to in the Asoka edicts, 69

Tamils, i their *Literature*, not independent of Sans, the oldest and most Vol 36, 87  
essential for S Ind His, 85, 212

the seven patrons of, 238  
light thrown on the boundary of the Mauryan Empire and the Mauryan Invasion of South India, 82, 85

ii. their country, attempted occupation of, 102.

divided among 3 kings, 200

iii. their capacity for navigation and ship building, 124, 137

iv their astrological system, 302, 303, 328

Tamravarnika, Chanakya's ref. to, 68

Taranatha, Tibetan historian, 85, 111, 208

Tatarya, 43

Taxila, kingdom of, 105  
excavations in, 20

Telugu Lit, modelled on Sans, 35

Tevaram Hymners, 203.

Thamodaram, Mr O W Pillai, editor of I Ahapporul, 253,  
Tidayan, identification with, of Tadayan, 189

Tilak, B G, on the Veda, etc, 315

Tilaka, a commentary, 94

Timma Pinna, 48

Tiruchchirambalakkovai, 38

Tirukkottur, capital of Kar, 198

Tirumanga Alvar, his age, 47.  
ref to Pallavas as Vilvell, 268

ref to the Sangam, 282

Tirupati temple, 37

Tiruvaimoli, of Nammalvar, 45

Todas, emigration, date of, 292

Tolkappiam, classical Tamil grammar, 249, 250  
division of the year in, 319.

Tulu Nadu, 93

entry into, by Kosar, 88

Tyndis, 115, 119, 230, 231

Trygæus, a character of Arista phanes, 323

## U

Udaya Chandra, Pallava general, 278

Udayana, Sabara King, 278

Upham, editor of the Mahavamsa, 131

Uruvapahrerilanjetobanni, ref to, by Parinar, 194

Uttarapatha, old expr for modern Hindustan, 59  
Uttar Phalguni, 299, 300.

## V

Vadukar, 90, 91, 92, 97  
munai, boundary of the Tamil country, 84  
frontier, 201  
Vada, 201

Vamba, 95, 98  
*Vamba Moisyar*, (*Maurya novae hominæ*), expr of Mamulauar, 89

wrong equation of, 206

Vanga, 68

Vangy, Chera capital, 188 189 200

its identification with Karur on uncertain and slender basis, 190

renewal of the walls of, 258

Varaguna Pandya, 45

Varahamihira, astronomer, 307, 327

Varthema, 17

Vedanta Desika, author of *Yacavabhyudayam*, 48

Velvikudi grant, 180 to 182, 257

Venkayya, Mr, 24

his reconstruction of Pandya history, 256

his masterly epigraphical reports, 257

extracts from, 261 to 264

Venkoba Rao G, 180

Vennikkuyattiyar, 285, 298

Vennil battle of, 129, 235

Viechikkon, 201

Vikrama Chola, 40, 48

Vikramaditya 56, 272

Virasoliyam Commentary, 289

Vishamasila, 57

Vishnu, Eastern Chalukya, 274

Vishnugopa of Kunchi, 188

Viyalur defeat at and destruction of, 219

## W

Week Day, Fleet's contention about, 301 *et seq.*

astrological character of and animistic notions in, 330

West Coast, piracy in, 228, 9, 231, 147 9

free from the pest, 232

the Red Chera's achievement in this connection, 151, 236

White Island, 230

Woodroffe, Justice on Indian sculpture, 28, 29

## Y

Yacavabhyudayam, 48

Yavannacharva quoted by Varahamihira 327

Yonas, 70, 71

Yueh chi, 108

Yule, editor of Marco Polo, 148 —9

## Z

Zenith Arc, contention about 296 to 299

Zungaria, plains of, 108